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SKETCHES  
OF THE  
HISTORY, GENIUS, DISPOSITION,  
ACCOMPLISHMENTS, EMPLOYMENTS,  
CUSTOMS, VIRTUES, AND VICES,  
OF THE  
FAIR SEX,  
IN ALL PARTS OF THE WORLD.  
INTERSPERSED WITH  
MANY SINGULAR AND ENTERTAINING  
ANECDOTES.

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*By a Friend to the Sex.*

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*“Graceful in all her steps—Heaven in her eye  
—In every gesture dignity and love.”—*

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GETTYSBURG:  
PRINTED BY ROBERT HARPER.

—1812.—



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# HISTORICAL SKETCHES

OF THE

## FAIR SEX.

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### CHAPTER I.

*Of the First Woman, and her Antediluvian Descendants.*

THE great Creator, having formed man of the dust of the earth, "made a deep sleep to fall upon him, and took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof. And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man." Hence the fair sex, in the opinion of some authors, being formed of matter doubly refined, derive their superior beauty and excellence.

Not long after the creation, the first woman was tempted by the serpent to eat of the fruit of a certain tree, in the midst of the garden of Eden, with regard to which God had said, "Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die."

This deception, and the fatal consequences arising from it, furnish the most interesting story in the whole history of the sex.

On the offerings being brought, and that of Abel accepted, Cain's jealousy and resentment rose to such a pitch, that, as soon as they came down from the mount where they had been sacrificing, he fell upon his brother and slew him.

For this cruel and barbarous action, Cain and his posterity, being banished from the rest of the human race, indulged themselves in every species of wickedness. On this account, it is supposed, they were called the *Sons and Daughters of Men*. The posterity of Seth, on the other hand, became eminent for virtue, and a regard to the divine precepts. By their regular and amiable conduct, they acquired the appellation of *Sons and Daughters of God*.

After the deluge there is a chasm in the history of women, until the time of the patriarch Abraham. They then begin to be introduced into the sacred story. Several of their actions are recorded. The laws, customs and usages, by which they were governed, are frequently exhibited.

## CHAPTER II.

*Of the Women in the Patriarchal Ages.*

THE condition of women, among the ancient patriarchs, appears to have been but extremely indifferent. When Abraham entertained the angels, sent to denounce the destruction of Sodom, he seems to have treated his wife as a menial servant: "Make ready quickly," said he to her, "three measures of fine meal, knead it, and make cakes on the hearth."

In many parts of the east, water is only to be met with deep in the earth, and to draw it from the wells is, consequently, fatiguing and laborious. This, however, was the task of the daughters of Jethro the Midianite; to whom so little regard was paid, either on account of their sex, or the rank of their father, as high-priest of the country, that the neighbouring shepherds not only insulted them, but forcibly took from them the water they had drawn.

This was the task of Rebecca, who not only drew water for Abraham's servant, but for his camels also, while the servant stood an idle spectator of the toil. Is it not natural to imagine, that, as he was on an embassy to court the damsel for Isaac, his master's son, he would have exerted his utmost efforts to please, and become acceptable?

When he had concluded his bargain, and was carrying her home, we meet with a circumstance worthy of remark. When she first approached Isaac, who had walked out into the fields to meet her, she did it in the most submissive manner, as if she had been approaching a lord and master, rather than a fond and passionate lover. From this circumstance, as well as from several others, related in the sacred history, it would seem that women, instead of endeavoring, as in modern times, to persuade the world that they confer an immense favour on a lover, by deigning to accept of him, did not scruple to confess, that the obligation was conferred on themselves.

This was the case with Ruth, who had laid herself down at the feet of Boaz; and being asked by him who she was, answered, "I am Ruth, thine handmaid; spread, therefore, thy skirt over thine handmaid, for thou art a near kinsman."

When Jacob went to visit his uncle Laban, he met Rachel, Laban's daughter, in the fields, attending on the flocks of her father.

In a much later period, Tamar, one of the daughters of king David, was sent by her father to perform the servile office of making cakes for her brother Amnon.

The simplicity of the times in which these things happened, no doubt, very much invalidates the strength of the conclusions that naturally arise from them. But, notwith-

standing, it still appears that women were not then treated with the delicacy which they have experienced among people more polished and refined.

Polygamy also prevailed ; which is so contrary to the inclination of the sex, and so deeply wounds the delicacy of their feelings, that it is impossible for any woman voluntarily to agree to it, even where it is authorized by custom and by law. Wherever therefore, polygamy takes place, we may assure ourselves that women have but little authority, and have scarcely arrived at any consequence in society.

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### CHAPTER III.

#### *Of the Women of Ancient Egypt.*

WHEREVER the human race live solitary, and unconnected with each other, they are savage and barbarous. Wherever they associate together, that association produces softer manners, and a more engaging deportment.

The Egyptians, from the nature of their country, annually overflowed by the Nile, had no wild beasts to hunt, nor could they procure any thing by fishing. On these accounts, they were under a necessity of applying themselves to agriculture, a kind of

life which naturally brings mankind together, for mutual convenience and assistance.

They were, likewise, every year, during the inundation of the river, obliged to assemble together, and take shelter, either on the rising grounds, or in the houses, which were raised upon piles, above the reach of the waters. Here, almost every employment being suspended, and the men and women long confined together; a thousand inducements, not to be found in a solitary state, would naturally prompt them to render themselves agreeable to each other. Hence their manners would begin, more early, to assume a softer polish, and more elegant refinement, than those of the other nations who surrounded them.

The practice of confining women, instituted by jealousy, and maintained by unlawful power, was not adopted by the ancient Egyptians. This appears from the story of Pharoah's daughter, who was going with her train of maids to bathe in the river, when she found Moses hid among the reeds. It is still more evident, from that of the wife of Potiphar, who, if she had been confined, could not have found the opportunities she did, to solicit Joseph to her adulterous embrace.

The queens of Egypt had the greatest attention paid to them. They were more readily obeyed than the kings. It is also related, that the husbands were in their marriage contracts obliged to promise obedience to



their wives; "an obedience," says an ingenious author,\* "which in our modern times, we are often obliged to perform, though our wives entered into the promise."

The behaviour of Solomon to Pharoah's daughter is a convincing proof that more honour and respect was paid to the Egyptian women, than to those of any other people. Solomon had many other wives besides this princess, and was married to several of them before her, which, according to the Jewish law, ought to have entitled them to a preference. But, notwithstanding this, we hear of no particular palace having been built for any of the others, nor of the worship of any of their gods having been introduced into Jerusalem. But a magnificent palace was erected for Pharoah's daughter; and she was permitted, though expressly contrary to the laws of Israel, to worship the gods of her own country.

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## CHAPTER IV.

### *Of the Modern Egyptian Women.*

THE women of modern Egypt are far from being on so respectable a footing as they were in ancient times, or as the European women are at present.

\* Dr. Alexander.

In Europe, women act parts of great consequence, and often reign sovereigns on the world's vast theatre. They influence manners and morals, and decide on the most important events. The fate of nations is frequently in their hands.

How different is their situation in Egypt ! There they are bound down by the fetters of slavery, condemned to servitude, and have no influence in public affairs. Their empire is confined within the walls of the Harem.\* There are their graces and charms entombed. The circle of their life extends not beyond their own family and domestic duties.

Their first care is to educate their children ; and a numerous posterity is their most fervent wish. Mothers always suckle their children. This is expressly commanded by Mahomet : *Let the mother suckle her child full two years, if the child does not quit the breast ; but she shall be permitted to wean it, with the consent of her husband.*

The harem is the cradle and school of infancy. The new-born feeble being is not there swaddled and filletted up in a swathe, the source of a thousand diseases. Laid naked on a mat, exposed in a vast chamber to the pure air, he breathes freely, and with his delicate limbs sprawls at pleasure. The new element, in which he is to live, is not entered with pain and tears. Daily bathed beneath

\* The Women's apartment.

his mother's eye, he grows apace. Free to act, he tries his coming powers; rolls, crawls, rises; and should he fall, cannot much hurt himself on the carpet or mat which covers the floor.

The daughter's education is the same. Whalebone and busks, which martyr European girls, they know not. They are only covered with a shift until six years old: and the dress they afterwards wear confines none of their limbs, but suffers the body to take its true form; and nothing is more uncommon than ricketty children, and crooked people. In Egypt, man rises in all his majesty, and women displays every charm of person.

Subject to the immutable laws by which custom governs the East, the women do not associate with the men, not even at table, where the union of sexes produces mirth and wit, and makes food more sweet. When the great incline to dine with one of their wives, she is informed, prepares the apartment, perfumes it with precious essences, procures the most delicate viands, and receives her lord with the utmost attention and respect.

Among the common people, the women usually stand, or sit in a corner of the room, while the husband dines. They often hold the bason for him to wash, and serve him at table.

Customs like these, which the Europeans rightly call barbarous, and exclaim against with justice, appear so natural in Egypt, that they

do not suspect it can be otherwise elsewhere: Such is the power of habit over man. What has been for ages, he supposes a law of nature:

The Egyptian women, once or twice a week, are permitted to go to the bath, and visit female relations and friends. They receive each other's visits very affectionately. When a lady enters the harem, the mistress rises, takes her hand, presses it to her bosom; kisses and makes her sit down by her side; a slave hastens to take her black mantle; she is entreated to be at ease, quits her veil and discovers a floating robe tied round the waist with a sash, which perfectly displays her shape. She then receives compliments according to their manner: "Why, my mother, or my sister, have you been so long absent? We sighed to see you! Your presence is an honour to our house! It is the happiness of our lives!"

Slaves present coffee, sherbet and confectionary. They laugh, talk and play. A large dish is placed on the sofa, on which are oranges, pomegranates, bananas, and excellent melons. Water, and rose-water mixed, are brought in an ewer, and with them a silver bason to wash the hands; and loud glee and merry conversation season the meal. The chamber is perfumed by wood of aloes, in a brazier; and, the repast ended, the slaves dance to the sound of cymbals, with whom the mistresses often mingle. At parting they several times repeat, "God keep you in health! Heaven grant you a numerous offspring! Heaven pre-

serve your children ; the delight and glory of your family !”

When a visitor is in the harem, the husband must not enter. It is the asylum of hospitality, and cannot be violated without fatal consequences ; a cherished right, which the Egyptian women carefully maintain, being interested in its preservation. A lover, disguised like a woman, may be introduced into the harem, and it is necessary he should remain undiscovered ; death would otherwise be his reward. In that country, where the passions are excited by the climate, and the difficulty of gratifying them, love often produces tragical events.

The Egyptian women, guarded by their eunuchs, go also upon the water, and enjoy the charming prospects of the banks of the Nile. Their cabins are pleasant, richly embellished, and the boats well carved and painted. They are known by the blinds over the windows, and the music by which they are accompanied.

When they cannot go abroad, they endeavor to be merry in their prison. Toward sun-setting, they go on the terrace, and take the fresh air among the flowers which are carefully reared. Here they often bathe ; and thus, at once, enjoy the cool, limpid water, the perfume of odoriferous plants, the balmy air, and the starry host, which shine in the firmament.

Thus Bathsheba bathed, when David beheld her from the roof of his palace.

Such is the usual life of the Egyptian women. Their duties are to educate their children, take care of their household, and live retired with their family : their pleasures, to visit, give feasts, in which they often yield to excessive mirth and licentiousness, go on the water, take the air in orange groves, and listen to the Almai. They deck themselves as carefully to receive their acquaintance, as European women do to allure the men. Usually mild and timid, they become daring and furious, when under the dominion of violent love. Neither locks nor grim keepers can then prescribe bounds to their passions ; which though death be suspended over their heads, they search the means to gratify, and are seldom unsuccessful.

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## CHAPTER V.

### *Of the Persian Women.*

SEVERAL historians, in mentioning the ancient Persians, have dwelt with peculiar severity on the manner in which they treated their women. Jealous, almost to distraction, they confined the whole sex with the strictest attention, and could not bear that the eye of a stranger should behold the beauty whom they adored.

When Mahomet, the great legislator of the modern Persians, was just expiring, the last advice that he gave to his faithful adherents, was, "Be watchful of your religion, and your wives." Hence they pretend to derive not only the power of confining, but also of persuading them, that they hazard their salvation, if they look upon any other man besides their husbands. The christian religion informs us, that in the other world they neither marry, nor are given in marriage. The religion of Mahomet teaches us a different doctrine, which the Persians believing, carry the jealousy of Asia to the fields of Elysium, and the groves of Paradise ; where, according to them, the blessed inhabitants have their eyes placed on the crown of their heads, lest they should see the wives of their neighbours.

Every circumstance in the Persian history tends to persuade us, that the motive, which induced them to confine their women with so much care and solicitude, was only exuberance of love and affection. In the enjoyment of their smiles, and their embraces, the happiness of the men consisted, and their approbation was an incentive to deeds of glory and of heroism. For these reasons they are said to have been the first who introduced the custom of carrying their wives and concubines to the field, "That the sight," said they, "of all that is dear to us, may animate us to fight more valiantly."

To offer the least violence to a Persian woman, was to incur certain death from her husband or guardian. Even their kings, though the most absolute in the universe, could not alter the manners or customs of the country, which related to the fair sex.

Widely different from this is the present state of Persia. By a law of that country, their monarch is now authorised to go whenever he pleases, into the harem of any of his subjects; and the subject, on whose prerogative he thus encroaches, so far from exerting his usual jealousy, thinks himself highly honoured by such a visit.

A laughable story, on this subject, is told of Shah Abbas, who having got drunk at the house of one of his favourites, and intending to go into the apartment of his wives, was stopped by the door-keeper, who bluntly told him, "Not a man, Sir, besides my master, shall put a muctacho here, so long as I am porter." "What," said the king, "dost thou not know me?" "Yes, answered the fellow, "I know you are king of the men, but not of the women." Shah Abbas, pleased with the answer, and the fidelity of the servant, retired to his palace. The favorite, at whose house the adventure happened, as soon as he heard it, went and fell at his master's feet, intreating that he would not impute to him the crime committed by his domestic. He likewise added, "I have already turned him away from my service for his presumption."—



“I am glad of it,” answered the king: “I will take him into my service for his fidelity.”

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## CHAPTER VI.

### *Of the Grecian Women.*

IT is observed by an able panegyrist for the fair, “That the greatest respect has always been paid them by the wisest and best of nations.” If this be true, the Greeks certainly forfeited one great claim to that wisdom which has always been attributed to them; for we have good reason to believe, that they regarded their women only as instruments of raising up members to the state.

In order to esteem the sex, we must do more than see them. By social intercourse, and a mutual reciprocation of good offices, we must become acquainted with their worth and excellence. This, to the Greeks, was a pleasure totally unknown. As the women lived retired in their own apartments, if they had any amiable qualities, they were buried in perpetual obscurity. Even husbands were, in Sparta, limited as to the time and duration of the visits made to their wives; and it was the custom at meals for the two sexes always to eat separately.

The apartments destined for the women, in order to keep them more private, were always in the back, and generally in the upper

part of the house. The famous Helen is said to have had her chamber in the loftiest part of it; and so wretched were their dwellings, that even Penelope, queen of Ulysses, seems to have descended from hers by a ladder.

Unmarried women, whether maids or widows, were under the strictest confinement. The former, indeed, were not allowed to pass without leave from one part of the house to another, lest they should be seen.

New married women were almost as strictly confined as virgins. Hermoine was severely reproved by her old duenna, for appearing out of doors; a freedom, which, she tells her, was not usually taken by women in her situation, and which would endanger her reputation should she happen to be seen.

Aristophanes introduces an Athenian lady, loudly complaining, that women were confined to their chambers, under lock and key, and guarded by mastiffs, goblins, or any thing that could frighten away admirers.

The confinement, however, of the Grecian women, does not appear, in some cases, to have been so much the effect of jealousy, as of indifference. The men did not think them proper companions; and that ignorance, which is the result of a recluse life, gave them too good a reason to think so. Nothing in Greece was held in estimation, but valour and eloquence. Nature had disqualified the fair sex for both. They were therefore considered

as mean and contemptible beings, much beneath the notice of heroes and of orators, who seldom favored them with their company. Thus deserted by a sex which ought to be the source of knowledge, the understandings of the women were but shallow, and their company uninteresting; circumstances which invariably happen in every country where the two sexes have little communication with each other.

In perusing the Grecian history, we every where meet with the most convincing proofs of the low condition of their women. Homer considers Helen, the wife of Menelaus, of little other value than as a part of the goods which were stolen along with her; and the restitution of these, and of her, are commonly mentioned in the same sentence, in such a manner, as to show, that such restitution would be considered as a full reparation of the injury sustained.

The same author, in celebrating Penelope, wife of Ulysses, for refusing in his absence so many suitors, does not appear to place the merit of her conduct, in a superior regard to chastity, or in love to her husband; but in preserving to his family the dowry she had brought along with her, which, on a second marriage, must have been restored to her father Icarius.

Telemachus is always represented as a most dutiful son. But, notwithstanding this, we find him reproving his mother in a man-

ner which shews that the sex, in general, were not treated with softness and delicacy, however dignified, or with whatever authority invested.

“ Your widowed hours, apart with female toil,  
And various labours of the loom beguile.  
There rule, from palace cares remote and free ;  
That care to man belongs, and most to me.”

If we take a view of the privileges bestowed by law or custom on the Grecian women, we shall find, that, in the earlier ages, they were allowed a vote in the public assemblies. This privilege, however, was afterwards taken from them. They succeeded equally with brothers to the inheritance of their fathers ; and to the whole of that inheritance, if they had no brothers. But to this last privilege was always annexed a circumstance, which must have been extremely disagreeable to every woman of sentiment and feeling. An heiress was obliged, by the laws of Greece, to marry her nearest relation, that the estate might not go out of the family ; and this relation, in case of a refusal, had a right to sue for the delivery of her person, as we do for goods and chattels.

He who divorced his wife was obliged either to return her dowry, or pay her so much per month, by way of maintenance. He who ravished a free woman was obliged in some states to marry her, in others to pay a hundred, and in others again, a thousand drachms.

But, when we impartially consider the good and ill treatment of the Grecian women, we find that the balance was much against them, and may therefore conclude, that, though the Greeks were eminent in arts, and illustrious in arms, yet, in politeness and elegance of manners, the highest pitch to which they ever arrived, was only a few degrees above savage barbarity.

In the different æras of Grecian history, however, we must not suppose that the women were always the same. It appears that the manners in the isles of Greece, in general, were much purer than on the continent. Those islanders, by being less exposed to foreign intercourse, could more easily preserve their laws and their virtues. The war-like convents of Lacedemon, the nurseries only of soldiers, would be much more rigid than the smiling retreats of Athens, whence politeness was propagated, and fashion announced; and the city of Thebes, where a rustic grossness supplied the place of an elegant luxury, must have been very different from Corinth, which on account of its situation and commerce, obtained the name of "The two seats of Wealth and Pleasure."

## CHAPTER VII.

*Of the Grecian Courtezans.*

THE rank which the courtezans enjoyed, even in the brightest ages of Greece, and particularly at Athens, is one of the greatest singularities in the manners of any people. By what circumstances could that order of women, who debase at once their own sex and ours—in a country, where the women were possessed of modesty, and the men of sentiment, arrive at distinction, and sometimes even at the highest degree of reputation and consequence? Several reasons may be assigned for that phenomenon in society.

In Greece the courtezans were in some measure connected with the religion of the country. The goddess of beauty had her altars; and she was supposed to protect prostitution, which was to her a species of worship. The people invoked Venus in times of danger; and, after a battle, they thought they had done honour to Miltiades and Themistocles, because the Laïses and the Glyceras of the age had chaunted hymns to their goddess.

The courtezans were likewise connected with religion, by means of the arts. Their persons afforded models for statues, which were afterwards adored in the temples.—Phrine served as a model to Praxiteles, for

his Venus of Cnidus. During the feasts of Neptune, near Eleusis, Appeles having seen the same courtesan on the sea shore, without any other veil than her loose and flowing hair, was so much struck with her appearance, that he borrowed from it the idea of his Venus rising from the waves.

They were, therefore, connected with statuary and painting, as they furnished the practisers of those arts with the means of embellishing their works.

The greater part of them were skilled in music; and, as that art was attended with higher effects in Greece, than it has ever been in any other country, it must have possessed, in their hands, an irresistible charm.

Every one knows how enthusiastic the Greeks were of beauty. They adored it in the temples. They admired it in the principal works of art. They studied it in the exercises and the games. They thought to perfect it by their marriages. They offered rewards to it at the public festivals. But virtuous beauty was seldom to be seen. The modest women were confined to their own apartments, and were visited only by their husbands and nearest relations. The courtesans offered themselves every where to view; and their beauty, as might be expected, obtained universal homage.

Society only can unfold the beauties of the mind. Modest women were excluded from it. The courtesans of Athens, by living in

public, and conversing freely with all ranks of people, upon all manner of subjects, acquired by degrees, a knowledge of history, of philosophy, of policy, and a taste in the whole circle of the arts. Their ideas were more extensive and various, and their conversation was more sprightly and entertaining, than any thing that was to be found among the virtuous part of the sex. Hence their houses became the schools of elegance. The poets and the painters went there to catch the fleeting forms of grace, and the changeable features of ridicule; the musicians, to perfect the delicacy of harmony; and the philosophers, to collect those particulars of human life, which had hitherto escaped their observation.

The house of Aspasia was the resort of Socrates and Pericles, as that of Ninon was of St. Evremont and Conde. They acquired from those fair libertines taste and politeness, and they gave them in exchange knowledge and reputation.

Greece was governed by eloquent men; and the celebrated courtezans, having an influence over those orators, must have had an influence on public affairs. There was not one, not even the thundering, the inflexible Demosthenes, so terrible to tyrants, but was subjected to their sway. Of that great master of eloquence it has been said, "What he had been a whole year in erecting, a woman overturned in a day." That influence augmen-



ted their consequence ; and their talent of pleasing increased with the occasions of exerting it.

The laws and the public institutions, indeed, by authorising the privacy of women, set a high value on the sanctity of the marriage vow. But in Athens, imagination, sentiment, luxury, the taste in arts and pleasure, was opposite to the laws. The courtezans, therefore, may be said to have come in support of the manners.

There was no check upon publick licentiousness ; but private infidelity, which concerned the peace of families, was punished as a crime. By a strange and perhaps unequalled singularity, the men were corrupted, yet the domestic manners were pure. It seems as if the courtezans had not been considered to belong to their sex ; and, by a convention to which the laws and the manners bended, while other women were estimated merely by their virtues, they were estimated only by their accomplishments.

These reasons will, in some measure account for the honours, which the votaries of Venus so often received in Greece. Otherwise we should have been at a loss to conceive, why six or seven writers had exerted their talents to celebrate the courtezans of Athens—why three great painters had uniformly devoted their pencils to represent them on canvass—and why so many poets had strove to immortalize them in verses. We should hardly have believed that so many illustrious

men had courted their society—that Aspasia had been consulted in deliberations of peace and war—that Phrine had a statue of gold placed between the statues of two kings at Delphos—that, after death, magnificent tombs had been erected to their memory.

“The traveller,” says a Greek writer, “who, approaching to Athens, sees on the side of the way a monument which attracts his notice at a distance, will imagine that it is the tomb of Miltiades or Pericles, or of some other great man, who has done honour to his country by his services. He advances, he reads and he learns that it is a courtesan of Athens who is interred with so much pomp.”

Theopompus, in a letter to Alexander the Great, speaks also of the same monument in words to the following effect—“Thus, after her death, is a prostitute honoured; while not one of those brave warriors who fell in Asia, fighting for you and for the safety of Greece, has so much as a stone erected to his memory, or an inscription to preserve his ashes from insult.”

Such was the homage which that enthusiastic people, voluptuous and passionate, paid to beauty. More guided by sentiment than by reason, and having laws rather than principles, they banished their great men, honoured their courtezans, murdered Socrates, permitted themselves to be governed by Aspasia, preserved inviolate the marriage bed, and placed Phrine in the temple of Apollo!

## CHAPTER VIII.

*Of the Roman Women.*

AMONG the Romans, a grave and austere people, who, during five hundred years, were unacquainted with the elegancies and the pleasures of life, and who, in the middle of furrows and fields of battle, were employed in tillage or in war, the manners of the women were a long time as solemn and severe as those of the men, and without the smallest mixture of corruption, or of weakness.

The time when the Roman women began to appear in public, marks a particular æra in history.

In the infancy of the city, and even until the conquest of Carthage, shut up in their houses, where a simple and rustic virtue paid every thing to instinct, and nothing to elegance—so nearly allied to barbarism, as only to know what it was to be wives and mothers—chaste without apprehending they could be otherwise—tender and affectionate, before they had learned the meaning of the words—occupied in duties, and ignorant that there were other pleasures ; they spent their life in retirement, in domestic œconomy, in nursing their children, and in rearing to the republic a race of labourers, or of soldiers.

The Roman women, for many ages, were respected over the whole world. Their victorious husbands re-visited them with transport, at their return from battle. They laid at their feet the spoils of the enemy, and en-

deared themselves in their eyes, by the wounds which they had received for them and for the state. Those warriors often came from imposing commands upon kings ; and in their own houses accounted it an honour to obey. In vain the too rigid laws had made them the arbiters of life and death. More powerful than the laws, the women ruled their judges. In vain the legislature, foreseeing the wants which exist only among a corrupt people, permitted divorce. The indulgence of the polity was proscribed by the manners.

Such was the influence of beauty at Rome before the licentious intercourse of the sexes had corrupted both.

The Roman matrons do not seem to have possessed that military courage which Plutarch has praised in certain Greek and Barbarian women : they partook more of the nature of their sex ; or, at least, they departed less from its character. Their first quality was decency. Every one knows the story of Cato the censor, *who stabbed a Roman Senator for kissing his own wife in the presence of his daughter.*

To these austere manners, the Roman women joined an enthusiastic love of their country, which discovered itself upon many great occasions. On the death of Brutus, they all cloathed themselves in mourning. In the time of Coriolanus they saved the city. That incensed warrior who had insulted the senate and the priests, and who was superior even to the pride of pardoning, could not resist the tears and intreaties of the women. *They melted*

his obdurate heart. The senate declared them public thanks, ordered the men to give place to them upon all occasions, caused an altar to be erected for them on the spot where the mother had softened her son, and the wife her husband ; and the sex were permitted to add another ornament to their head-dress.

It is to be wished that our modern ladies could assign as good a reason for the size of their caps.

The Roman women saved the city a second time when besieged by Brennus. They gave up all their gold as its ransom. For that instance of their generosity, the senate granted them the honour of having funeral orations pronounced in the rostrum, in common with patriots and heroes.

After the battle of Cannæ, when Rome had no other treasures but the virtues of their citizens, the women sacrificed both their gold and their jewels. A new decree rewarded their zeal.

Valerius Maximus, who lived in the reign of Tiberius, informs us that, in the second triumvirate, the three assassins who governed Rome, thirsting after gold, no less than blood, and having already practised every species of robbery, and worn out every method of plunder, resolved *to tax the women*. They imposed a heavy contribution upon each of them. The women sought an orator to defend their cause, but found none. Nobody would reason against those who had the power of life and death. The daughter of the celebrated Hortensius alone appeared. She revived

the memory of her father's abilities & supported with intrepidity her own cause, and that of her sex. The ruffians blushed and revoked their orders.

Hortensia was conducted home in triumph, and had the honour of having given, in one day, an example of courage to men, a pattern of eloquence to women, and a lesson of humanity to tyrants.

But the æra of the talents of women at Rome is to be found under the emperors. Society was then more perfected by opulence, by luxury, by the use and abuse of the arts, and by commerce. Their retirement was then less strict ; their genius, being more active, was more exerted ; their heart had new wants ; the idea of reputation sprung up in their minds ; their leisure increased with the division of employments.

During upwards of six hundred years, the *virtues* had been found sufficient to please. They now found it necessary to call in the *accomplishments*. They were desirous to join admiration to esteem, till they learned to exceed esteem itself. For in all countries, in proportion as the love of virtue diminishes, we find the love of talents to increase.

A thousand causes concurred to produce this revolution of manners among the Romans. The vast inequality of ranks, the enormous fortunes of individuals, the ridicule, affixed by the imperial court to moral ideas, all contributed to hasten the period of corruption.

There were still, however, some great and virtuous characters among the Roman women. Portia, the daughter of Cato, and wife of Brutus, in the conspiracy against Cæsar, shewed herself worthy to be associated with the first of human kind, and trusted with the fate of empires. After the battle of Philippi, she would neither survive liberty nor Brutus, but died with the bold intrepidity of Cato.

The example of Portia was followed by that of Arria, who seeing her husband hesitating and afraid to die, in order to encourage him, pierced her own breast and delivered to him the dagger with a smile.

The name of Arria's husband was Pætus. The manner of their death has furnished Martial with the subject of an elegant epigram, which may be thus paraphrased :

"When to her husband Arria gave the sword,  
Which from her chaste, her bleeding breast she drew ;  
She said, *My Pætus, this I do not fear ;*  
*But O ! the wound that must be made by you !*  
She could no more—but on her Pætus still.  
She fix'd her feeble, her expiring eyes ;  
And when she saw him raise the pointed steel,  
She sunk, and seem'd to say *Now Arria dies !*"

Paulinia too, the wife of Seneca, caused her veins to be opened at the same time with her husband's ; but being forced to live, during the few years which she survived him, "she bore in her countenance," says Tacitus, "the honourable testimony of her love, a paleness, which proved that part of her blood had sympathetically issued with the blood of her spouse."

The same exalted virtues were displayed, though in a different manner, by Agrippina, the wife of Germanicus; who, naturally haughty and sensible, after the death of that great man, buried herself in retirement in all the bloom of youth; and who, neither bending her stateliness under Tiberius, nor allowing herself to be corrupted by the manners of her age—as implacable in her hatred to the tyrant, as she had been faithful to her husband—spent her life in lamenting the one, and in detesting the other. Nor should the celebrated Epiniana be forgot, whom Vespasian ought to have admired, but whom he so basely put to death.

To take notice of all the celebrated women of the empire, would much exceed the bounds of the present undertaking. But the empress Julia, the wife of Septimius Severus, possessed a species of merit so very different from any of those already mentioned, as to claim particular attention.

This lady was born in Syria, and the daughter of a priest of the sun. It was predicted that she should rise to sovereign dignity; and her character justified the prophecy.

Julia, while on the throne, loved, or pretended passionately to love, letters. Either from taste, from a desire to instruct herself, from a love of renown, or possibly from all these together, she spent her life with philosophers. Her rank of empress would not, perhaps, have been sufficient to subdue those bold spirits; but she joined to that the more powerful influences of wit and beauty.—



These three kinds of empire rendered less necessary to her that which consists only in art; and which, attentive to their tastes and their weaknesses, governs great minds by little means.

It is said that she was a philosopher. Her philosophy, however, did not extend so far as to give chastity to her manners. Her husband, who did not love her, valued her understanding so much, that he consulted her upon all occasions. She governed in the same manner under his son.

Julia was, in short, an empress and a politician, occupied at the same time about literature and affairs of state, while she mingled her pleasures freely with both. She had courtiers for her lovers, scholars for her friends, and philosophers for her counsellors. In the midst of a society, where she reigned and was instructed, Julia arrived at the highest celebrity; but as, among all her excellencies, we find not those of her sex, the virtues of a woman, our admiration is lost in blame. In her life time she obtained more praise than respect: and posterity, while it has done justice to her talents and her accomplishments, has agreed to deny her esteem.

At last, in following the course of history, the famous Zenobia presents herself: she was worthy to have been a pupil of *Longinus*; for she knew how to write, as well as how to conquer. When she was afterward unfortunate, she was so with dignity. She consoled herself for the loss of a throne, and the plea-

asures of grandeur, with the sweets of solitude and the joys of reason.

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## CHAPTER IX.

### *Laws and Customs respecting the Roman Women.*

THE Roman women, as well as the Grecian, were under perpetual guardianship; and were not at any age, nor in any condition, ever trusted with the management of their own fortunes.

Every father had a power of life and death over his own daughters: but this power was not restricted to daughters only; it extended also to sons.

The Oppian law prohibited women from having more than half an ounce of gold employed in ornamenting their persons, from wearing clothes of divers colours, and from riding in chariots, either in the city, or a thousand paces round it.

They were strictly forbid to use wine, or even to have in their possession the key of any place where it was kept. For either of these faults they were liable to be divorced by their husbands. So careful were the Romans in restraining their women from wine, that they are supposed to have first introduced the custom of saluting their female relations and acquaintances, on entering into the house of a friend or neighbor, that they might

discover by their breath, whether they had tasted any of that liquor.

This strictness, however, began in time to be relaxed; until at last, luxury becoming too strong for every law, the women indulged themselves in equal liberties with the men.

But such was not the case in the earlier ages of Rome. Romulus even permitted husbands to kill their wives, if they found them drinking wine. And if we may believe Valerius Maximus, Egnatius Metellus, having detected his wife drinking out of a cask, actually made use of this permission, and was acquitted by Romulus.

Fabius Pictor relates, that the parents of a Roman lady, having detected her picking the lock of a chest which contained some wine, shut her up and starved her to death.

Women were liable to be divorced by their husbands almost at pleasure, provided the portion was returned which they had brought along with them. They were also liable to be divorced for barrenness, which, if it could be construed into a fault, was at least the fault of nature, and might sometimes be that of the husband.

A few sumptuary laws, a subordination to the men, and a total want of authority, do not so much affect the sex, as to be coldly and indelicately treated by their husbands.

Such a treatment is touching them in the tenderest part. Such, however, we have reason to believe, they often met with from the Romans, who had not yet learned, as in modern times, to blend the rigidity of the patriot,

and roughness of the warrior, with that soft and indulging behaviour, so conspicuous in our modern patriots and heroes.

Husbands among the Romans not only themselves behaved roughly to their wives, but even sometimes permitted their servants and slaves to do the same. The principal eunuch of Justinian the second, threatened to chastise the Empress, his master's wife, in the manner that children are chastised at school, if she did not obey his orders.

With regard to the private diversions of the Roman ladies, history is silent. Their public ones were such as were common to both sexes; as bathing, theatrical representations, horse-races, shows of wild beasts, which fought against one another, and sometimes against men, whom the emperors, in the plenitude of their despotic power, ordered to engage them.

The Romans, of both sexes, spent a great deal of time at the baths; which at first, perhaps, were interwoven with their religion, but at last were only considered as refinements in luxury. They were places of public resort, where all the news of the times were to be heard, where people met with their acquaintances and friends, where public libraries were kept for such as chose to read, and where poets recited their works to such as had patience to hear.

In the earlier periods of Rome, separate baths were appropriated to each sex. Luxury by degrees getting the better of decency, the men and women at last bathed promiscuously

together. Though this indecent manner of bathing was prohibited by the emperor Adrian; yet, in a short time, inclination overcame the prohibition; and, in spite of every effort, promiscuous bathing continued until the time of Constantine, who, by the coercive force of the legislative authority, and the rewards and terrors of the Christian religion, put a final stop to it.

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## CHAPTER X.

### *Of the Effects of Christianity on the Manners of Women.*

PHILOSOPHY had no fixed principles for women. The religion of antiquity was only a kind of sacred policy, which had rather ceremonies than precepts. The ancients honored their gods as we honour our great men: they offered them incense, and expected their protection in exchange. The gods were their guardians, not their legislators.

Christianity on the other hand, was a legislation: it imposed laws for the regulation of manners; it strengthened the marriage knot; to the political it added a sacred tie, and placed the matrimonial engagements under the jurisdiction of Heaven.

Not satisfied with regulating the actions, Christianity extended its empire even to the thoughts. Above all, it combated the senses. It waged war even with such inanimate objects as might be the objects of seduction, or

were the means of seduction. In a word, rousing vice in her secret cell, it made her become her own tormentor.

The legislation of the Greeks and Romans referred the motive of every action to the political interest of society. But the new and sacred legislation, inspiring only contempt for this world, referred all things to a future and very different state of existence.

The detachment of the senses, the reign of the soul, and an inexpressibly sublime and supernatural something, which blended itself with both, became the doctrine of a body of the people. Hence the vow of continence, and consecration of celibacy.

Life was a combat. The sanctity of the manners threw a veil over nature and over society ; Beauty was afraid to please ; Valor dropt his spear ; the passions were taught to submit ; the severity of the soul increased every day, by the sacrifices of the senses.

The women, who generally possess a lively imagination, and a warm heart, devoted themselves to virtues, which were as flattering as they were difficult, and no less elevated than austere.

The disciples of christianity were taught to love and comfort one another, like children of the same family. In consequence of this doctrine, the more tender sex, converting to pity the sensibility of nature, devoted their lives to the service of indigence and distress. Delicacy learned to overcome disgust. The tears of pity were seen to flow in the huts of

misery, and in the cells of disease, with the friendly sympathy of a sister.

The persecutions which arose in the empire, soon after the introduction of christianity, afforded that religion a new opportunity of discovering its efficacy. To preserve the faith, it was often necessary to suffer imprisonment, banishment and death. Courage then became necessary.

There is a deliberate courage which is the result of reason, and which is equally bold and calm : it is the courage of philosophers and of heroes. There is a courage which springs from the imagination, which is ardent and precipitate ; such is most commonly the courage of martyrs, or religious courage.

The courage of the Christian women was founded upon the noblest motives. Animated by the glorious hope of immortality, they embraced flames and gibbets, and offered their delicate and feeble bodies to the most excruciating tortures.

This revolution in the ideas and in the manners was followed by another in the writings. Such as made women their subject became as austere and seraphic as they.

Almost all the doctors of those times, raised by the church both to the rank of orators and of saints, emulated each other in praising the Christian women. But he who speaks of them with most eloquence and with most zeal, is Saint Jerome ; who, born with a soul of fire, spent twenty-four years, in writing, in combating and in conquering himself.

The manners of this saint were probably more severe than his thoughts. He had a number of illustrious women at Rome among his disciples. Thus surrounded with beauty, though he escaped weakness, yet he was not able to escape calumny. At last, flying from the world, from women, and from himself, he retired to Palestine; where all that he had fled from still pursued him, tormented him under the penitential sackcloth, and in the middle of solitary deserts, re-echoed in his ears the tumult of Rome.

Such was Saint Jerome, the most eloquent panegyrist of the Christian women of the fourth century. That warm and pious writer, though generally harsh and obscure, softens his style, in a thousand places, to praise a great number of Roman women, who at the Capitol, had embraced christianity, and studied in Rome the language of the Hebrews, that they might read and understand the books of Moses.

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## CHAPTER XI.

### *Of the Women in Savage Life.*

MAN, in a state of barbarity, equally cruel and indolent, active by necessity, but naturally inclined to repose, is acquainted with little more than the physical effects of love; and, having none of those moral ideas which only can soften the empire of force, he is led to consider it as his supreme law, subjecting to



his despotism those whom reason had made his equals, but whose imbecility betrayed them to his strength.

Cast in the lap of naked nature, and exposed to every hardship, the forms of women, in savage life, are but little engaging. With nothing that deserves the name of culture, their latent qualities, if they have any, are like the diamond, while inclosed in the rough flint, incapable of shewing any lustre. Thus destitute of every thing by which they can excite love, or acquire esteem ; destitute of beauty to charm, or art to soothe, the tyrant man ; they are by him destined to perform every mean and servile office. In this the American and other savage women differ widely from those of Asia, who, if they are destitute of the qualifications necessary for gaining esteem, have beauty, ornaments, and the art of exciting love.

In civilized countries a woman acquires some power by being the mother of a numerous family, who obey her maternal authority, and defend her honour and her life. But, even as a mother, a female savage has not much advantage. Her children, daily accustomed to see their father treat her nearly as a slave, soon begin to imitate his example, and either pay little regard to her authority, or shake it off altogether.

Of this the Hottentot boys afford a remarkable proof. They are brought up by the women, till they are about fourteen years of age. Then, with several ceremonies, they are initiated into the society of men. After this

initiation is over, it is reckoned manly for a boy to take the earliest opportunity of returning to the hut of his mother, and beating her in the most barbarous manner, to show that he is now out of her jurisdiction. Should the mother complain to the men, they would only applaud the boy, for shewing so laudable a contempt for the society and authority of women.

"Nothing," says Professor Miller, speaking of the women of barbarous nations, "can exceed the dependence and subjection in which they are kept, or the toil and drudgery which they are obliged to undergo. The husband when he is not engaged in some warlike exercise, indulges himself in idleness, and devolves upon his wife the whole burden of his domestic affairs. He disdains to assist her in any of those servile employments. She sleeps in a different bed, and is seldom permitted to have any conversation or correspondence with him."

In the Brazils, the females are obliged to follow their husbands to war, supply the place of beasts of burden, and to carry on their backs their children, provisions, hammocks, and every thing wanted in the field.

In the Isthmus of Darien, they are sent along with warriors and travellers, as we do baggage horses. Even their queen appeared before some English gentlemen, carrying her suckling child wrapt in a red blanket.

The women among the Indians of America are what the Helots were among the Spartans, a vanquished people obliged to toil for

their conquerors. Hence on the banks of Oroonoko we have heard of mothers slaying their daughters out of compassion, and smothering them in the hour of their birth. They consider this barbarous pity as a virtue.

Father Joseph Gumilla, reproving one of them for this inhuman crime, received the following answer :—" I wish to God, Father, I wish to God, that my mother had, by my death, prevented the manifold distresses I have endured, and have yet to endure as long as I live. Had she kindly stifled me in my birth, I should not have felt the pain of death, nor the numberless other pains to which life has subjected me. Consider, Father, our deplorable condition. Our husbands go to hunt with their bows and arrows, and trouble themselves no farther : we are dragged along with one infant at our breast, and another in a basket. They return in the evening without any burden : we return with the burden of our children. Though tired with long walking, we are not allowed to sleep, but must labor the whole night, in grinding maize to make *chica* for them. They get drunk and in their drunkenness beat us, draw us by the hair of the head, and tread us under foot. What then have we to comfort us for slavery, perhaps of twenty years ?—A young wife is brought us and permitted to abuse us and our children. Can human nature endure such tyranny ? What kindness can we shew to our female children, equal to that of reliving them from such servitude, more bitter a thousand times than death ? I

repeat again, would to God my mother had put me under ground, the moment I was born."

If the great outlines of this complaint be true, they fully evince the deplorable condition of savage women; and that they are probable, similar instances among barbarous nations will not permit us to doubt.

"The men," says Commodore Bryon, in his account of the inhabitants of South America, "exercise a most despotic authority over their wives, whom they consider in the same view they do any other part of their property, and dispose of them accordingly. Even their common treatment of them is cruel. For, though the toil and hazard of procuring food lies entirely on the women, yet they are not suffered to touch any part of it, until the husband is satisfied; and then he assigns them their portion, which is generally very scanty, and such as he has not a stomach for himself."

The Greenlanders, who live most upon seals, think it sufficient to catch and bring them on shore; and would almost rather submit to starve, than assist their women in skinning, dressing or dragging the cumbrous animals home to their huts.

In some parts of America, when the men kill any game in the woods, they lay it at the root of a tree, fix a mark there, and travelling until they arrive at their habitation, send their women to fetch it; a task which their own laziness and pride equally forbid.

Among many of the tribes of wandering

Arabs, the women are not only obliged to do every domestic and every rural work, but also to feed, to dress, and saddle the horses, for the use of their husbands.

The Moorish women, besides doing all the same kinds of drudgery, are also obliged to cultivate the fields, while their husbands stand idle spectators of the toil, or sleep inglorious beneath a neighbouring shade.

In Madura the husband generally speaks to his wife in the most imperious tone; while she with fear and trembling approaches him, waits upon him while at meals, and pronounces not his name, but with the addition of every dignifying title she can devise. In return for all this submission, he frequently beats and abuses her in the most barbarous manner. Being asked the reason of such a behaviour, one of them answered, "As our wives are so much our inferiors, why should we allow them to eat and drink with us?—Why should they not serve us with whatever we call for, and afterwards sit down and eat up what we leave?—If they commit faults, why should they not suffer correction? It is their business only to bring up our children, pound our rice, make our oil, and do every other kind of drudgery, purposes to which only their low and inferior natures are adapted."

In several parts of America women are not suffered to enter into their temples, or join in their religious assemblies. In the houses where the chiefs meet to consult on the affairs of state, they are only permitted to

enter and seat themselves on the floor on each side of the passage.

The Circassian custom of breeding young girls, on purpose to be sold in the public market to the highest bidder, is generally known. Perhaps, however, upon minute examination, we shall find that women are, in some degree, bought and sold in every country, whether savage or civilized.

The following remark may very properly conclude this chapter: As, among savages, we almost constantly find women condemned to every species of slavish drudgery; so we as constantly find them emerging from this state, in the same proportion as we find the men emerging from ignorance and brutality. The rank, therefore, and condition in which we find women in any country, mark out to us with the greatest precision the exact point in the scale of civil society, to which the people of such country have arrived. And, indeed, were their history silent on every other subject, and only mentioned the manner in which they treated their women, we should from thence be enabled to form a tolerable judgment of the barbarity or culture of their manners.

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## CHAPTER XII.

### *Of the Eastern Women.*

THE women of the east have, in general, always exhibited the same appearance. Their

manners, customs and fashions, unalterable like their rocks, have stood the test of many revolving ages. Though the kingdoms of their country have often changed masters, though they have submitted to the arms of almost every invader, yet the laws by which their sex are governed and enslaved, have never been revised nor amended.

Had the manners and customs of the Asiatic women been subject to the same changes as they are in Europe, we might have expected the same changes in the sentiments and writings of their men. But, as this is not the case, we have reason to presume that the sentiments entertained by Solomon, by the apocryphal writers, and by the ancient Bramins, are the sentiments of this day.

Though the confinement of women be an unlawful exertion of superior power, yet it affords a proof that the inhabitants of the east are advanced some degrees farther in civilization than mere savages, who have hardly any love and consequently as little jealousy.

This confinement is not very rigid in the empire of the Mogul. It is, perhaps, less so in China, and in Japan hardly exists.

Though women are confined in the Turkish empire, they experience every other indulgence. They are allowed, at stated times, to go to the public baths; their apartments are richly, if not elegantly furnished; they have a train of female slaves to serve and amuse them; and their persons are adorned with every costly ornament which their fathers or husbands can afford.

Notwithstanding the strictness of confinement in Persia, their women are treated with several indulgences. They are allowed a variety of precious liquors, of costly perfumes, and beautiful slaves: their apartments are furnished with the most elegant hangings and carpets; their persons ornamented with the finest silks, and even loaded with the sparkling jewels of the east. But all these trappings, however elegant, or however gilded, are only like the golden chains sometimes made use of to bind a royal prisoner.

Solomon had a great number of queens and concubines; but a petty Hindoo chief has been known to have two thousand women confined within the walls of his harem, and appropriated entirely to his pleasure. Nothing less than unlimited power in the husband is able to restrain women so confined, from the utmost disorder and confusion. They may repine in secret, but they must clothe their features with cheerfulness when their lord appears. Contumacy draws down on them immediate punishment: they are degraded, chastised, divorced, shut up in dark dungeons, and sometimes put to death.

Their persons, however, are so sacred, that they must not in the least be violated, nor even looked at, by any one but their husbands. This female privilege has given an opportunity of executing many conspiracies. Warriors, in such vehicles as are usually employed to carry women, have been often conveyed, without examination, into the apartments of the great; from whence, instead of



issuing forth in the smiles of beauty, they have rushed out in the terror of arms, and laid the tyrants at their feet.

No stranger is ever allowed to see the women of Hindostan, nor can even brothers visit their sisters in private. To be conscious of the existence of a man's wives seems a crime; and he looks surly and offended, if their health is enquired after. In every country, honour consists in something upon which the possessor sets the highest value. This, with the Hindoo, is the chastity of his wives; a point without which he must not live.

In the midst of slaughter and devastation, throughout all the east, the harem is a sanctuary. Ruffians, covered with the blood of a husband, shrink back with veneration from the secret apartment of his wives.

At Constantinople, when the sultan sends an order to strangle a state criminal, and seize on his effects, the officers who execute it enter not into the harem, nor touch any thing belonging to the women.

Mr. Pope is very far from doing justice to the fair sex, when he says—

“Most women have no character at all.”

The character, however, of the Asiatic ladies cannot be easily ascertained. The narrow and limited sphere in which they move, almost entirely divests them of every characteristic distinction which arises from liberty and society. Shut up forever in impenetrable harems, they can hardly be called creatures of the world, having no intercourse with it, and no

use for the social and economical virtues which adorn its citizens. Frugality and industry are entirely out of their power. To the joys of friendship they are, perhaps, entire strangers. The men treat them in such a manner, that it is impossible they can esteem them. The women are their constant rivals. As they are not allowed to attend public worship, they can have no other religion than the silent adoration of the heart. With respect to chastity, the manner in which they are disposed of to their husbands, and the treatment they meet with from them, are the most unlikely methods in the world to make them famous for that virtue.

Those females who are the least exposed to feel the oppressive effects of despotism, employ themselves in a manner adapted to the sex. To the women of Hindostan we owe a great part of those works of taste, so elegantly executed on the manufactures of the east; the beautiful colourings and exquisite designings of their printed cottens; all the embroidery, and a part of that fillagree work, which so much exceeds any thing in Europe. The deficiency of taste, therefore, with which we so commonly charge them, does not seem to be so much a defect of nature, as of education. Brought up in luxurious indolence, excluded from all the busy scenes of life, and, like children, provided with all those things, the acquisition of which calls forth the powers of the mind and body, they seldom have any motive to exert themselves; but when such a motive exists, they

have often exhibited the most convincing proofs of their ability.

Every Turkish seraglio and harem has a garden adjoining to it, and in the middle of this garden a large room, more or less decorated, according to the wealth of the proprietor. Here the ladies spend most of their time, with their attendant nymphs around them, employed at their music, embroidery or loom.

In these retreats, perhaps, they find more real pleasure and enjoyment, than in the unbounded freedom of Europe, where love, interest and ambition so often destroy their peace; and where scandal, with her envenomed shafts, too often strikes equally at guilt and innocence.

It has long been a custom among the grandees of Asia, to entertain story-tellers of both sexes, who like the bards of ancient Europe, divert them with tales, and little histories, mostly on the subject of bravery and love. These often amuse the women, and beguile the cheerless hours of the harem, by calling up images to their minds, which their eyes are forever debarred from seeing.

All their other amusements, as well as this, are indolently voluptuous. They spend a great part of their time in lolling on silken sofas; while a train of female slaves, scarcely less voluptuous, attend to sing to them, to fan them, and to rub their bodies; an exercise which the Easterns enjoy with a sort of placid ecstacy, as it promotes the circulation of their languid blood.

They bathe themselves in rose water, and other baths, prepared with the precious odours of the East. They perfume themselves with costly essences, and adorn their persons, that they may please the tyrant with whom they are obliged to live.

At the court of the Mogul, women are frequently admitted into a gallery, with a curtain before them, through which, without being seen, they can see and hear what passes. It has sometimes happened that the throne has been occupied by a woman, who never appearing in open court, issued her imperial mandates from behind this curtain, like an invisible being, producing the greatest effects, while the cause of them was wrapt in darkness and obscurity.

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## CHAPTER XIII.

### *Of the Chinese Women.*

Of all the other Asiatics, the Chinese have, perhaps, the best title to modesty.— Even the men wrap themselves closely up in their garments, and reckon it indecent to discover any more of their arms and legs than is necessary. The women, still more closely wrapped up, never discover a naked hand even to their nearest relations, if they can possibly avoid it. Every part of their dress, every part of their behaviour is calculated to preserve decency, and inspire respect. And, what adds the greatest lustre to their charms,

is that uncommon modesty which appears in every look and in every action.

Charmed, no doubt, with so engaging a deportment, the men behave to them in a reciprocal manner. And, that their virtue may not be contaminated by the neighbourhood of vice, the legislature takes care that no prostitutes shall lodge within the walls of any of the great cities of China.

Some, however, suspect whether this appearance of modesty be any thing else than the custom of the country; and allege that, notwithstanding so much seeming decency and decorum, they have their peculiar modes of intriguing, and embrace every possible opportunity of putting them in practice; and that, in these intrigues, they frequently scruple not to stab the paramour they had invited to their arms, as the surest method of preventing detection and loss of character. Such relations, however, are not to be found in any of our modern travellers, whose veracity is most to be depended on. A few perhaps, of the most flagitious *may* be guilty of such enormous crimes.

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## CHAPTER XIV.

### *Of the Wives of the Indian Priests.*

THE Bramins, or priests of India, though, like the rest of their countrymen, they confine their women; yet, by treating them with

lenity and indulgence, they secure their virtue by attaching their hearts.

Married to each other in their infancy, they have the greatest veneration for the nuptial tie. Their mutual fondness increases with their strength; and, in riper years, all the glory of the wives consists in pleasing their husbands. This duty they consider as one of the most sacred of their holy religion, and which the gods will not suffer them to neglect with impunity.

While the rest of the Hindoo women take every opportunity to elude their keepers, these voluntarily confine themselves, at least from the company and conversation of all strangers, and in every respect copy that simplicity of life and manners for which their husbands are so remarkable.

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## CHAPTER XV.

*A comparison between the Mahometans and Dutch, with regard to their Women.*

“WOMEN have naturally most power,” says an ingenious lady,\* “in those countries where the laws relative to them are most rigid; and, wherever legislators have most abridged their privileges, their power is most confessed.”

If we take a slight view of the laws relative to the sex amongst people of different

\* Mrs. Kindersley.

characters, and the customs which seem to throw light upon the subject, it will appear that women have often been, and still are, restrained, confined, and subjected to severe laws, in proportion to the greatness of their natural power; and that they are, by the laws and usages, encouraged and supported in proportion to their want of it.

Of this fact, the laws and customs of the Mahometans in Asia respecting women, and the laws and manners relative to them amongst the people of Holland, are a sufficient proof.

A Mahometan places his supreme delight in his seraglio: his riches are bestowed in purchasing women to fill it: and, in proportion to his fortune, his females are beautiful and numerous. In women he places his chief amusement, his luxury, his present happiness and future reward.

But this violent fondness for the sex, divided as it is betwixt many favorites, informs him that other men have the same violent passions. The beauties of his seraglio, which delight him, he knows would delight other men, could they obtain a sight of them.—Hence arise the strict confinement of his women, the guards of eunuchs, and every possible bar to their being visible to other men. Hence it is, likewise, that, when he receives any new beauty into his house, the most profound secrecy is observed. But he does not always confine his wives and female slaves, because he holds them in contempt: he guards their persons, as his most valuable treasures.

This extreme uxoriousness of the men, is what gives the women their natural power over them; and the knowledge of this power has caused the men to establish laws and customs, to prevent in some measure its effects.

These laws prevent the women from having any share in government, debar them from entering the mosques, from holding any lands, or enjoying any fortunes, independent of their husbands or parents; and, in short, give their husbands an absolute authority over them.

In Holland, on the contrary, where the men are of a phlegmatic disposition, devoted to gain, enemies to luxury, prudent, selfish, and cold in their attachments to the sex, the natural power of the women must consequently be small. On this account, as there is little danger that the men will treat them with too much kindness, or be seduced by their allurements, the laws are calculated not to increase, but to restrain the authority of husbands; and the magistrates find it necessary to support the women in the privileges the laws have given them, by great attention to their complaints.

Nevertheless, in spite of the severity of the Mahometan laws respecting women, and the lenity of the laws respecting them in Holland, it appears that there have been numbers of Mahometans (even men on whom the fate of kingdoms has depended) who have given themselves up to the entire direction of their female favorites; though it does not appear



that Dutch husbands give up their interest through the influence of their wives.

The manners of Mahometan women, and the manners of Dutch women, are no less different than the laws by which they are governed; and, in both, the difference arises from the same causes.

As a Mussulman procures wives and female slaves for his pleasure only, nothing is expected in them but youth and beauty, or, at most, the arts of singing and dancing.— They are too precious to be fatigued by cares. As their business is only to make themselves agreeable, they attire themselves in the most expensive dresses, practice the most becoming attitudes, and throw their eyes with the most bewitching languishment; are feeble and indolent in their youth; and old age, which comes upon women early in their climate, is spent in jealousy of their more youthful rivals.

But as a Dutch woman is expected to serve, she attends to business, and neglects her person: she is inelegant and robust; her laughs are hearty, and her expressions coarse.

A Dutchman desires in his wife an assistant, a steward, a partner in his cares. She only expects to be valued in proportion to her industry and economy; as, therefore, the Mahometan women are examples of the most extreme indolence; the Dutch women are remarkable for their application to business. Thus they become of consequence in themselves, as well as useful in promoting the interest of their husbands, not only by their

domestic economy, but by their knowledge in traffic. The wife, indeed, is very often, both the assistant and the director of her husband's affairs; and many unmarried women are very considerable merchants.

But though many of them, by their industry and application to business, gain a degree of consequence, it is a consequence independent of their sex. It is not the woman, but the merchant, who is considered.

The women of Holland are under very little restraint, because the Dutch are unacquainted with that jealousy which torments a Mussulman; and can, without any uneasiness, see their wives carrying on business, and striking bargains, with the greatest strangers.

In contrast to the mysterious secrecy with which a female is ushered into a seraglio, the marriages of the Dutch are proclaimed long before they take place; and their courtships are carried on even without that reserve and delicacy observed in the politer nations of Europe.

In speaking of Holland, we must be understood to mean the bulk of the people. A few people of rank are imitators of the French manners. Among these, however, the national character is visible.

## CHAPTER XVI.

*Of the African Women.*

THE Africans were formerly renowned for their industry in cultivating the ground, for their trade, navigation, caravans and useful arts. At present they are remarkable for their idleness, ignorance, superstition, treachery, and, above all, for their lawless methods of robbing and murdering all the other inhabitants of the globe.

Though they still retain some sense of their infamous character, yet they do not choose to reform. Their priests, therefore, endeavor to justify them, by the following story : “ Noah,” say they, “ was no sooner dead, than his three sons, the first of whom was *white*, the second *tawny*, and the third *black*, having agreed upon dividing among them his goods and possessions, spent the greatest part of the day in sorting them; so that they were obliged to adjourn the division till the next morning.— Having supped, and smoaked a friendly pipe together, they all went to rest, each in his own tent. After a few hours sleep, the white brother got up, seized on the gold, silver, precious stones and other things of the greatest value, loaded the best horses with them, and rode away to that country where his white posterity have been settled ever since. The tawny, awaking soon after, and with the same criminal intention, was surprised, when he came to the storehouse, to find that his bro-

ther had been beforehand with him. Upon which, he hastily secured the rest of the horses and camels, and loading them with the best carpets, clothes, and other remaining goods, directed his rout to another part of the world, leaving behind him only a few of the coarsest of the goods, and some provisions of little value.

“ When the third, or black brother, came next morning, in the simplicity of his heart, to make the proposed division, and could neither find his brethren, nor any of the valuable commodities, he easily judged that they had tricked him, and were by that time fled beyond any possibility of a discovery.

“ In this most afflicted situation, he took his pipe, and begun to consider the most effectual means of retrieving his loss, and being revenged on his perfidious brothers.

“ After revolving a variety of schemes in his mind, he at last fixed upon watching every opportunity of making reprisals on them, and laying hold of and carrying away their property, as often as it should fall in his way, in revenge for the loss of that patrimony of which they had so unjustly deprived him.

“ Having come to this resolution, he not only continued in the practice of it all his life, but on his death-bed laid the strongest injunctions on his descendants to do so, to the end of the world.”

Some tribes of the Africans, however, when they have engaged themselves in the protection of a stranger, are remarkable for

fidelity. Many of them are conspicuous for their temperance, hospitality and several other virtues.

Their women, upon the whole, are far from being indelicate or unchaste. On the banks of the Niger, they are tolerably industrious, have a considerable share of vivacity, and at the same time a female reserve, which would do no discredit to a politer country. They are modest, affable, and faithful; an air of innocence appears in their looks, and in their language, which gives beauty to their whole deportment.

When, from the Niger, we approach toward the east, the African women degenerate in stature, complexion, sensibility and chastity. Even their language, like their features, and the soil they inhabit, is harsh and disagreeable. Their pleasures resemble more the transports of fury, than the gentle emotions communicated by agreeable sensations.

Beyond the river Volta, in the country of Benin, the women, though far from being famous for any of the virtues, would not be disagreeable in their looks, were it not for the abominable custom of marking their faces with scars, for the same purposes as our European ladies lay on paint.

Though in a few respects better than savages, there is a particular opinion all over this country, which tends to humanize the mind. This is a firm persuasion, that, to whatever place they remove themselves, or are by any accident removed, they shall after death re-

turn to their own country, which they consider as the most delightful in the universe.

This fond delusive hope not only softens the slavery to which they are often condemned in other countries, but also induces them to treat such strangers as come among them with much civility. They think they are come there to enjoy paradise, and to receive the reward of virtuous actions done in other countries.



## CHAPTER XVII.

*Of the effects of Chivalry on the Character and the Manners of Women.*

HISTORY does not afford so singular a revolution in policy and manners, as that which followed the subversion of the Roman empire.

It is to the barbarians, who spread conflagration and ruin, who trampled on the monuments of art, and spurned the appendages of elegance and pleasure, that we owe the bewitching spirit of gallantry which in these ages of refinement, reigns in the courts of Europe. That system, which has made it a principle of honor among us to consider the women as sovereigns; which has partly formed our customs, our manners, and our policy; which has exalted the human character, by softening the empire of force; which mingles politeness with the use of the sword; which delights in protecting the weak, and in

conferring that importance which nature or fortune have denied—that system was brought hither from the frozen shores of the Baltic, and from the savage forests of the North.

The northern nations, in general, paid a great respect to women. Continually employed in hunting or in war, they condescended only to soften their ferocity in the presence of the fair. Their forests were the nurseries of chivalry: beauty was there the reward of valour.

A warrior, to render himself worthy of his mistress, went in search of glory and of danger. Jealousy produced challenges. Single combats, instituted by love, often stained with blood the woods and the borders of the lakes; and the sword ascertained the rights of Venus as well as of Mars.

Let us not be surprised at these manners. Among men who have made few advances in civilization, but who have already united in large bodies, women have naturally the greatest sway. Society is then sufficiently cultivated to have introduced the ideas of preference and of choice, in the connection between the sexes, which seem to be little regarded, if at all known, among savages. It is however too rude to partake of that state of effeminacy, in which the senses are enfeebled, and the affections worn out by habit.

People but little removed from barbarism, in the perfection of their animal powers, and ignorant of all those artificial pleasures created by the wants of polished life, feel more exquisitely the pleasures of nature, and the genuine

emotions of man. They mingle even with their love a kind of adoration to the female sex.

Several of the northern nations imagined that women could look into futurity, and that they had about them an inconceivable something approaching to divinity. Perhaps that idea was only the effect of the sagacity common to the sex, and the advantage which their natural address gave them over rough and simple warriors. Perhaps, also, those, barbarians, surprized at the influence which beauty has over force, were led to ascribe to supernatural attraction a charm which they could not comprehend.

A belief, however, that the Deity communicates himself more readily to women, has at one time or another prevailed in every quarter of the earth: not only the Germans and the Britons, but all the people of Scandinavia, were possessed of it. Among the Greeks, women delivered the oracles. The respect which the Romans paid to the Sibyls is well known. The Jews had their prophetesses. The predictions of the Egyptian women obtained much credit at Rome, even under the emperors. And in the most barbarous nations, all things that have the appearance of being supernatural, the mysteries of religion, the secrets of physic, and the rights of magic, are in the possession of the women.

The barbarians who over-ran Europe carried their opinions along with their arms. A revolution in the manner of living must therefore soon have taken place. The climates of



the north required little reserve between the sexes ; and, during the invasions from that quarter, which continued for three or four hundred years, it was common to see women mixed with warriors.

By associating with a corrupted people, who had all the vices of former prosperity, along with those of present adversity, the conquerors were not likely to imbibe more severe ideas. Hence we see those sons of the north in softer climates, uniting the vices of refinement to the stateliness of the warrior, and the pride of the barbarian.

They embraced Christianity ; but it rather modified than changed their character : it mingled itself with their customs, without altering the genius of the people.

Thus, by degrees, were laid the foundations of new manners, which, in modern Europe, have brought the two sexes more on a level by assigning to the women a kind of sovereignty, and associating love with valour.

The true æra of chivalry was the fourteenth century. That civil and military institution took its rise from a train of circumstances, and the native bent of the new inhabitants.

Shattered by the fall of the empire, Europe had not yet arrived at any degree of consistency. After five hundred years, nothing was fixed. From the mixture of Christianity with the ancient customs of the barbarians, sprung a continual discord in manners. From the mixture of the rights of the priesthood with those of the empire, sprung a discord in laws and politics. From the mixture of the rights

of sovereigns with those of the nobility, sprung a discord in government. Anarchy and confusion were the result of so many contrasts.

Christianity which had now lost much of its original influence, like a feeble curb, was still sufficient to restrain the weak passions, but was no longer able to bridle the strong. It produced remorse, but could not prevent guilt.

The people of those times made pilgrimages, and they pillaged : they massacred, and they afterwards did penance. Robbery and licentiousness were blended with superstition.

It was in this æra that the nobility, idle and warlike, from a sentiment of natural equity, and that uneasiness which follows the perpetration of violence, from the double motive of religion and heroism, associated themselves together to effect, in a body, what government had neglected, or but poorly executed.

Their object was to combat the Moors in Spain, the Saracens in Asia, the tyrants of the castles and strong holds in Germany and in France ; to assure the safety of travellers, as Hercules and Theseus did of old ; and, above all things, to defend the honour and protect the rights of the feeble sex, against the too frequent villainy and oppression of the strong.

A noble spirit of gallantry soon mingled itself with that institution. Every knight, in devoting himself to danger, listed himself under some lady as his sovereign : it was for her that he attacked, for her that he defended, for her that he mounted the walls of cities and of castles, and for her honour that he shed his blood.

Europe was only one large field of battle, where warriors clad in armour, and adorned with ribbands and with the cyphers of their mistresses, engaged in close fight to merit the favour of beauty.

Fidelity was then associated with courage, and love was inseparably connected with honour.

The women, proud of their sway, and of receiving it from the hands of virtue, became worthy of the great actions of their lovers, and reciprocated passions as noble as those they inspired. An ungenerous choice debased them. The tender sentiment was never felt, but when united with glory : and the manners breathed an inexpressible something of pride, heroism, and tenderness, which was altogether astonishing.

Beauty, perhaps, never exercised so sweet or so powerful an empire over the heart. Hence those constant passions which our levity cannot comprehend, and which our manners, our little weaknesses, our perpetual thirst of hopes and desires, our listless anxiety that torments us, and which tires itself in pursuit of emotion without pleasure, and of impulse without aim, have often turned into ridicule on our theatres, in our conversations, and in our lives.

But it is nevertheless true, that those passions, fostered by years, and roused by obstacles ; where respect kept hope at a distance ; where love, fed only by sacrifices, sacrificed itself unceasingly to honour—reinvigorated the characters and the souls of the two sexes ; gave more energy to the one, and more ele-

vation to the other ; changed men into heroes ; and inspired the women with a *pride* which was by no means hurtful to virtue.

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## CHAPTER XVIII.

### *The opinion of two Modern Authors concerning Chivalry.*

THE sentiments of two late writers of high reputation corroborate this account of the origin and progress of chivalry.

“ The system of chivalry, when completely formed,” says Professor Ferguson, “ proceeded on a marvellous respect and veneration to the fair sex, on forms of combat established, and on a supposed junction of the heroic and sanctified character. The formalities of the duel, and a kind of judicial challenge, were known among the ancient Celtic nations of Europe. The Germans, even in their native forests, paid a kind of devotion to the female sex. The Christian religion enjoined meekness and compassion to barbarous ages.

“ These different principles, combined together, may have served as the foundation of a system, in which courage was directed by religion and love, and the warlike and gentle were united together. When the characters of the hero and the saint were mixed, the mild spirit of Christianity, though often turned into venom by the bigotry of opposite parties ; though it could not always subdue

the ferocity of the warrior, nor suppress the admiration of courage and force; may have confirmed the apprehensions of men, in what was to be held meritorious and splendid, in the conduct of their quarrels.

“The feudal establishments, by the high rank to which they elevated certain families, no doubt greatly favoured this romantic system. Not only the lustre of a noble descent, but the stately castle beset with battlements and towers, served to inflame the imagination, and to create a veneration for the daughter and the sister of gallant chiefs, whose point of *honour* it was to be inaccessible and chaste; and who could perceive no merit but that of the high minded and the brave, nor be approached in any other accents than those of gentleness and respect.”

Professor Millar, in his observations concerning the distinction of ranks in society, gives the following sensible and pleasing account of chivalry: “From the prevailing spirit of the times, the art of war became the study of every one who was desirous of maintaining the character of a gentleman. The youth were early initiated in the profession of arms, and served a sort of apprenticeship under persons of rank and experience.

“The young squire became in reality the servant of that leader to whom he had attached himself, and whose virtues were set before him as a mode which he proposed to imitate.

“He was taught to perform, with ease and dexterity, those exercises which were either

ornamental or useful; and, at the same time, he endeavoured to acquire those talents and accomplishments which were thought suitable to his profession.

“ He was taught to look upon it as his duty to check the insolent, to restrain the oppressor, to protect the weak and defenceless; to behave with frankness and humanity even to an enemy, with modesty and politeness to all.

“ According to the proficiency which he had made, he was proportionably advanced in rank and character. He was honoured with new titles and marks of distinction, till at length he arrived at the dignity of knighthood. This dignity even the greatest potentates were ambitious of acquiring, as it was supposed to distinguish a person who had obtained the most complete military education, and who had attained to a high degree of eminence in those particular qualities which were then universally admired and respected.

“ The situation of mankind in those periods had also a manifest tendency to heighten and improve the passion between the sexes.

“ It was not to be expected that those opulent chiefs, who were so often at variance, and who maintained a constant opposition to each other, would allow any sort of familiarity to take place between the members of their respective families. Retired in their own castles, and surrounded by their numerous vassals, they looked upon their neighbours either as inferior to them in rank, or as enemies against whom they were obliged to be constantly upon their guard. They behaved to

each other with that ceremonious civility which the laws of *chivalry* required; but, at the same time, with that reserve and caution which a regard to their own safety made it necessary for them to observe.

“The young knight, as he marched to the tournament, saw at a distance the daughter of the chieftain by whom the show was exhibited; and it was even with difficulty that he could obtain access to her, in order to declare the sentiments with which she had inspired him. He was entertained by her relations with that cold respect which demonstrated their unwillingness to contract an alliance with him. The lady herself was taught to assume the pride of her family, and to think that no person was worthy of her affection, who did not possess the most exalted rank and character. To have given way to a sudden inclination, would have disgraced her for ever in the opinion of all her kindred; and it was only by a long course of attention, and of the most respectful service, that the lover could hope for any favour from his mistress.

“The barbarous state of the country at that time, and the injury to which the inhabitants, especially those of the weaker sex, were frequently exposed, gave ample scope for the display of military talents; and the knight who had nothing to do at home was encouraged to wander from place to place, and from one court to another, in quest of adventures. Thus he endeavoured to advance his reputation in arms, and to recommend himself to the fair of whom he was enamour.

ed, by fighting with every person who was so inconsiderate as to dispute her unrivalled beauty, virtue or personal accomplishments.

“ As there were many persons in the same situation, so they were naturally inspired with similar sentiments. Rivals to one another in military glory, they were often competitors, as Milton expresseth it, *to win her grace whom all commend*; and the same emulation which disposed them to aim at pre-eminence in one respect, excited them with no less eagerness to dispute the preference in the other. Their dispositions and manner of thinking became fashionable; and were gradually diffused by the force of education and example.

“ To be in love was looked upon as one of the necessary qualifications of a knight; and he was no less ambitious of shewing his constancy and fidelity to his mistress, than of displaying his military virtues. He assumed the title of her slave and servant. By this he distinguished himself in every conflict in which he was engaged; and his success was supposed to redound to her honour, no less than to his own. If she had bestowed upon him a *present* to be worn in the field of battle, in token of her regard, it was considered as a sure pledge of victory, and as laying upon him the strongest obligation to act in such manner as would render him worthy of the favour which he had received.

“ The sincere and faithful passion, the distant *sentimental* attachment which commonly occupied the heart of every warrior, and which



he possessed upon all occasions, was naturally productive of the utmost purity of manners, and of great respect and veneration for the female sex.

“Persons who made a point of defending the reputation and dignity of that particular lady to whom they were devoted, became thereby extremely cautious and delicate, lest, by any *insinuation* whatever, they should hurt the *character* of another, and be exposed to the just censure and resentment of those by whom she was protected.

“A woman who deviated so far from the established maxims of the age, as to violate the laws of chastity, was indeed deserted by every body, and was therefore universally condemned and insulted. But those who adhered to the strict rules of virtue, and maintained an unblemished reputation, were treated like beings of a superior order.”

Such was the spirit of chivalry. It gave birth to an incredible number of performances in honour and in praise of women. The verses of the bards, the Italian sonnet, the plaintive romance, the poems of chivalry, the Spanish and French romances, were so many monuments of that kind, composed in the time of a noble barbarism, and of a heroism, in which the great and ridiculous were often blended.

These compositions, all once so much celebrated, are only calculated to gratify a vain curiosity. They may be compared to the ruins of a Gothic palace. They have in general, the same foundation; and the praises

in the one are as uniform as the apartments in the other. All the women are *prodigies* of beauty, and miracles of virtue.

In the courts, in the fields of battle or of tournament, every thing breathed of women. The same taste prevailed in letters. One did not write, one did not think, but for them. The same man was often both poet and warrior. He sung with his lyre, and encountered with his lance, by turns for the beauty that he adored.

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## CHAPTER XIX.

### *Of the great Enterprises of Women in the Times of Chivalry.*

THE times and the manners of chivalry, by bringing great enterprises, bold adventures, and I know not what of extravagant heroism into fashion, inspired the women with the same taste.

The two sexes imitate each other. Their manners and their minds are refined or corrupted, invigorated or dissolved together.

The women, in consequence of the prevailing passion, were now seen in the middle of camps and of armies. They quitted the soft and tender inclinations, and the delicate officers of their own sex, for the courage, and toilsome occupations of ours.

During the crusades, animated by the double enthusiasm of religion and of valour, they often performed the most romantic exploits.

They obtained indulgencies on the field of battle, and died with arms in their hands, by the side of their lovers, or of their husbands.

In Europe, the women attacked and defended fortifications. Princesses commanded their armies, and obtained victories.

Such was the celebrated Joan de Mountfort, disputing for her duchy of Bretagne, and engaging the enemy herself.

Such was the still more celebrated Margaret of Anjou, queen of England, and wife of Henry VI. She was active and intrepid, a general and a soldier. Her genius for a long time supported her feeble husband, taught him to conquer, replaced him upon the throne, twice relieved him from prison, and, though oppressed by fortune and by rebels, she did not yield, till she had decided in person twelve battles.

The warlike spirit among the women, consistent with ages of barbarism, when every thing is impetuous because nothing is fixed, and when all excess is the excess of force, continued in Europe upwards of four hundred years, shewing itself from time to time, and always in the middle of convulsions, or on the eve of great revolutions.

But there were æras and countries, in which that spirit appeared with particular lustre. Such were the displays it made in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries in Hungary, and in the Islands of the Archipelago and the Mediterranean, when they were invaded by the Turks.

Every thing conspired to animate the wo-

men of those countries with an exalted courage : the prevailing spirit of the foregoing ages ; the terror which the name of the Turks inspired ; the still more dreadful apprehensions of an unknown enemy ; the difference of *dress*, which has a stronger *effect* than is commonly supposed on the imagination of a people ; the difference of religion, which produced a kind of sacred horror ; the striking difference of manners ; and, above all, the confinement of the female sex, which presented to the women of Europe nothing but the frightful ideas of servitude and a master ; the groans of honor, the tears of beauty in the embrace of barbarism, and the double tyranny of love and pride !

The contemplation of these objects, accordingly roused in the hearts of the women a resolute courage to defend themselves ; nay, sometimes even a courage of enthusiasm, which hurried itself against the enemy. — That courage, too, was augmented, by the promises of a religion, which offered eternal happiness in exchange for the sufferings of a moment.

It is not therefore surprisong, that, when three beautiful women of the isle of Cyprus were led prisoners to Selim, to be secluded in the seraglio, one of them, preferring death to such a condition, conceived the project of setting fire to the magazine ; and after having communicated her design to the rest, put it in execution.

The year following the city of Cyprus being besieged by the Turks, the women ran in crowds, mingled themselves with the soldiers,

and, fighting gallantly in the breach, were the means of saving their country.

Under Mahomet II. a girl of the isle of Lemnos, armed with the sword and shield of her father, who had fallen in battle, opposed the Turks, when they had forced a gate, and chased them to the shore.

In Hungary the women distinguished themselves miraculously in a number of sieges and battles against the Turks. A woman of Transylvania, in different engagements, is said to have *killed* six Janissaries with her own hand.

In the two celebrated sieges of Rhodes and Malta, the women, seconding the zeal of the knights, discovered upon all occasions the greatest intrepidity ; not only that impetuous and temporary impulse which despises death, but that cool and deliberate fortitude which can support the continued hardships, the toils, and the miseries of war.

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## CHAPTER XX.

*Other curious Particulars concerning Females in those Ages.*

WHILE Charlemagne swayed the sceptre in France, confession was considered as so absolutely necessary to salvation, that in several cases, and particularly at the point of death, where no priest or man could be had, it was by the church allowed to be made to a woman.

In the sixteenth century it was no uncommon thing for church-livings, the revenues of abbeys, and even of bishoprics, to be given away with the young ladies as a portion.

Thus women exercised a kind of sacerdotal function : and, though they did not actually officiate at the altar, they enjoyed (what many of the priests themselves would have been glad of) the *emolument* of the altar, without the drudgery of its service.

In posterior ages, women have crept still farther into the offices of the church. The Christians of Circassia allow their nuns to administer the sacrament of baptism.

When any material difference happened between man and man, or when one accused another of a crime, the decision, according to an ancient custom established by law, was to be by a single combat or the ordeal trial. From both which ridiculous ways of appealing to heaven women were exempted.

When a man had said any thing that reflected dishonor on a woman, or accused her of a crime, she was not obliged to fight him to prove her innocence : the combat would have been unequal. But she might choose a champion to fight in her cause, or expose himself to the horrid trial, in order to clear her reputation. Such champions were generally selected from her lovers or friends. But if she fixed upon any other, so high was the spirit of martial glory, and so eager the thirst of defending the weak and helpless sex, that we meet with no instance of a champion ever having refused to fight for, or undergo

whatever custom required in defence of the lady who had honored him with the appointment.

To the motives already mentioned, we may add another. He who had refused, must inevitably have been branded with the name of coward : and, so despicable was the condition a coward, in those times of general heroism, that death itself appeared the more preferable choice. Nay, such was the rage of fighting for women, that it became customary for those who could not be honoured with the decision of their real quarrels, to create fictitious ones concerning them, in order to create also a necessity of fighting.

Nor was fighting for the ladies confined to single combatants. Crowds of gallants entered the list against each other. Even Kings called out their subjects, to shew their love to their mistresses, by cutting the throats of their neighbours, who had not in the least offended.

In the fourteenth century, when the countess of Blois and the widow of Mountfort were at war against each other, a conference was agreed to, on pretence of settling a peace, but in reality to appoint a combat. Instead of negotiating, they soon challenged each other ; and Beaumanoir, who was at the head of the Britons, publicly declared that they fought from no other motive, than to see, by the victory, who had the fairest mistress.

In the fifteenth century, we find an anecdote of this kind still more extraordinary. John, duke de Bourbonnois, published a declaration, that he would go over to England,

with sixteen knights, and there fight it out, in order to avoid idleness, and merit the good graces of his mistress.

James IV. of Scotland having, in all tournaments, professed himself knight to queen Anne of France, she summoned him to prove himself her true and valorous champion, by taking the field in her defence, against his brother-in-law, Henry VIII. of England. He obeyed the romantic mandate; and the two nations bled to feed the vanity of a woman.

Warriors, when ready to engage, invoked the aid of their mistresses, as poets do that of the Muses. If they fought valiantly, it reflected honor on the Dulcineas they adored; but if they turned their backs on their enemies, the poor ladies were dishonored for ever.

Love, was, at that time, the most prevailing motive to fighting. The famous Gaston de Foix, who commanded the French troops at the battle of Ravenna, took advantage of this foible of his army. He rode from rank to rank, calling his officers by name, and even some of his private men, recommending to them their country, their honor, and, above all, to shew what they could do for the love of their mistresses.

The women of those ages, the reader may imagine, were certainly more completely happy than in any other period of the world.— This, however, was not in reality the case.

Custom, which governs all things with the most absolute sway, had, thro' a long succession of years, given her sanction to such com-



bats as were undertaken, either to defend the innocence, or display the beauty of women. Custom, therefore, either obliged a man to fight for a woman who desired him, or marked the refusal with infamy and disgrace. But custom did not oblige him, in every other part of his conduct, to behave to this woman, or to the sex in general, with that respect and politeness which have happily distinguished the character of more modern times.

The same man who would have encountered giants, or gigantic difficulties, "when a lady was in the case," had but little idea of adding to her happiness, by supplying her with the comforts and elegancies of life.— And, had she asked him to stoop, and ease her of a part of that domestic slavery which, almost in every country, falls to the lot of women, he would have thought himself quite affronted.

But besides, men had nothing else, in those ages, than that kind of romantic gallantry to recommend them. Ignorant of letters, arts and sciences, and every thing that refines human nature, they were, in every thing where gallantry was not concerned, rough and unpolished in their manners and behaviour. Their time was spent in drinking, war, gallantry and idleness. In their hours of relaxation, they were but little in company with their women; and when they were, the indelicacies of the carousal, or the cruelties of the field, were almost the only subjects they had to talk of.

From the subversion of the Roman empire, to the fourteenth or fifteenth century, women spent most of their time alone. They were almost entire strangers to the joys of social life. They seldom went abroad, but to be spectators of such public diversions and amusements as the fashion of the times countenanced. Francis I. was the first monarch who introduced them on public days to court.

Before his time, nothing was to be seen at any of the courts of Europe, but long-bearded politicians, plotting the destruction of the rights and liberties of mankind; and warriors clad in complete armour, ready to put their plots in execution.

In the eighth century, so slavish was the condition of women on the one hand, and so much was beauty coveted on the other, that, for about two hundred years, the kings of Austria were obliged to pay a tribute to the Moors, of one hundred beautiful virgins per annum.

In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, elegance had scarcely any existence, and even cleanliness was hardly considered as laudable. The use of linen was not known; and the most delicate of the fair sex wore woolen shifts.

In the time of Henry VIII. the peers of the realm carried their wives behind them on horseback, when they went to London; and, in the same manner, took them back to their country seats, with hoods of waxed linen over their heads, and wrapped in mantles of cloth, to secure them from the cold.

There was one misfortune of a singular nature, to which women were liable in those days: they were in perpetual danger of being accused of witchcraft, and suffering all the cruelties and indignities of a mob, instigated by superstition and directed by enthusiasm; or of being condemned by laws, which were at once a disgrace to humanity and to sense. Even the bloom of youth and beauty could not secure them from torture and from death. But when age and wrinkles attacked a woman, if any thing uncommon happened in her neighbourhood, she was almost sure of atoning with her life, for a crime it was impossible for her to commit.

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## CHAPTER XXI.

### *Of the Arabian Women.*

THE consequence of the women in Arabia was annihilated by Mahomet. But before his time they seem to have possessed privileges hardly inferior to those with which they are honoured in the politest countries of Europe.

The law gave them a right to independent property, either by inheritance, by gift, or by marriage settlement. The wife had a regular dower, and an annual allowance, which she might dispose of in her life time, or at her death.

To the fortune he received with his wife, Cadhiga, who carried on an extensive trade

to Spain and Syria, Mahomet himself was indebted for the origin of his wealth and grandeur.

While his sect was increasing, the women of rank took an active part both in civil and military affairs. Several of them strongly opposed all his innovations. Henda, accompanied by fifteen other ladies of distinction, contributed to his defeat at the battle of Ohod. After his death, Ayesha, one of his widows, by her influence and address, raised her father Abubeker to be the successor of her husband.

But the religion which taught that women were only mere objects of pleasure, and the maxims which dictated that they should be guarded for that particular purpose, now becoming general, in little more than a century they seem to have dwindled from creatures of importance, to beings only consecrated to dalliance and love.

Such were the consequences of Mahometanism. But no innovation that could happen in the ages in which it was introduced, need much surprise us. The politics of the Arabians were then regulated by no fixed principles. Their religion had disgusted the mind with idle articles of belief, and improbable fictions. This was not the case in Arabia only: human nature, as was before observed, seemed every where in a state of wavering and imbecility. In Europe it endeavoured to blend the meek and forgiving spirit of the religion of Jesus, with the fierce and intolerant spirit of war and bloodshed; and

the same tender sentiment which bound a lover to his mistress, instigated him, in the most savage manner, to cut the throats of all those who openly professed either to love or hate her.

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## CHAPTER XXII.

### *On the Learning of Women.*

WHEN chivalry began to decline in Europe, it left behind it a tincture of romantic gallantry in the manners, which communicated itself to the works of imagination.

Many verses were then written, expressive of passions either real or feigned, but always respectful and tender. In France, where the dissipated nobility spent their life in war, love was generally painted under the idea of conquest. In Italy, where another set of ideas prevailed, it was always represented as an adoration or worship.

This confusion of religion and gallantry, of Platonism and poetry, of the study of the languages and of the laws, of the ancient philosophy and the modern theology, formed the general character of the most illustrious men of those times. The same observation may be extended to the most celebrated women.

Never were the women so universally distinguished for profound learning, as in this period. Perhaps, as it followed the ages of chivalry, when several women had disputed with men the prize of valour, being de-

sirous to establish the equality of their sex in all things, they were ambitious to prove that they had as much genius as courage; and to subject, even by their talents, those over whom they reigned by their beauty.

The general spirit of this period is worthy of observation. We might then have seen women preaching, and mixing themselves in controversies; women occupying the chairs of philosophy and of justice; women haranguing in Latin before the Pope; women writing in Greek, and studying Hebrew. Nuns were poetesses, and women of quality divines. And young girls, who had studied eloquence, would, with the sweetest countenances, and the most plaintive voices in the world, go and pathetically exhort the Pope and the Christian princes to declare war against the Turks.

The religious spirit, which has animated women in all ages, shewed itself at this time; but it changed its form. It had made them, by turns, martyrs, apostles, warriors, and concluded in making them divines and scholars.

An incredible value was still set on the study of languages. In private families, in the convents, in the courts, and even upon thrones, the same taste reigned. It was but a poor qualification for a *woman* to read Virgil and Cicero. The mouth of a young Italian, Spanish, or British lady seemed adorned with a particular grace, when she repeated some *Hebrew* phrase, or thundered out some verses of Homer.

Poetry, so charming to the imagination and to susceptible hearts, was embraced with ardour by the women. It was a new and pleasing exertion of talents, which flattered self-love, and amused the mind. Perhaps, too, that want which they experienced, even without suspecting it, in a subtle philosophy, an abstract theology and an empty study of dialects and of sounds, would make them more sensible to the charms of an art, which continually feeds the imagination with its images, and the heart with its sentiments.

I shall particularize a few of the women who were most celebrated for their learning and talents in that period.

In the thirteenth century, a young lady of Bologna devoted herself to the study of the Latin language and of the laws. At the age of twenty-three, she pronounced a funeral oration in Latin in the great church of Bologna; and, to be admitted as an orator, she had neither need of indulgence, on account of her youth, nor her sex. At the age of twenty-six, she took the degree of a doctor of laws, and began publicly to expound the Institutions of Justinian. At the age of thirty, her great reputation raised her to a chair, where she taught the law to a prodigious concourse of scholars from all nations. She joined the charms and accomplishments of a woman to all the knowledge of a man. But such was the power of her eloquence, that her *beauty* was only admired when her *tongue* was silent.

In the fourteenth century, a like example was exhibited in that city. In the fifteenth

century, the same prodigy appeared there a third time. And, even at this day, in the city of Bologna, there is still a learned chair filled with honor by a woman.

At Venice, in the course of the sixteenth century, two celebrated women attract our notice. The one \* composed successfully a great number of pieces in verse, serious, comic, heroic, and tender ; and some *pastorals*, which were much admired. The other †, who was one of the most learned women of Italy, wrote equally well the three languages of Homer, Virgil, and Dante, and in verse as well as in prose. She possessed all the philosophy of her own, and of the preceding ages. By her graces, she even embellished theology. She supported *these* with the greatest lustre. She gave public lectures at Padua. She joined to her serious studies the elegant arts, particularly music ; and softened her learning still farther by her manners. She received homage from sovereign pontiff and sovereign princes ; and, that she might be singular in all things, she lived upwards of a *century*.

At Verona, Issotta Nogarolla acquired so great a reputation by her eloquence, that kings were curious to listen, and scholars to attend, to hear, and to see.

At Florence, a nun of the house of Strozzi dispelled the languor and indolence of the cloister by her taste for letters ; and, in her solitude, was known over Italy, Germany, and France.

\* Modesta di Pozzi di Zori.

† Callandra Fidele.



At Naples, Sarrochia composed a celebrated poem upon Scandeberg; and, in her life-time, was compared to Boyardo and to Tasso.

At Rome, we find Victoria Colonna, marchioness of Pescaira, who passionately loved and successfully cultivated letters. While still young, she bewailed the loss of a husband, who was a great warrior, and passed the remainder of her life in study and melancholy, celebrating in the most tender poetry, the hero whom she loved.

During the same age, among the illustrious women of all ages, we find every where the same character, and the same kind of studies.

In Spain, Isabella of Rosera preached in the great church of Barcelona, came to Rome under Paul the Third, and converted the *Jews* by her eloquence. Isabella of Cardoua understood the Latin, Greek, and Hebrew; and, though possessed of beauty, reputation, and riches, had still the fancy to be a *doctor*, and took her degrees in theology.

In France we see several women possessed of all the learning of the times, particularly the dutchess of Retz, who under Charles IX. was celebrated even in Italy, and who astonished the Popish nobility, when they came to demand the duke of Anjou for their king. They beheld with wonder, at the court, a young lady so intelligent, and who spoke the ancient languages with no less purity than grace.

In England, we meet with the three Seymours, sisters, nieces to a king, and daughters to a regent, all celebrated for their learning, and for their elegant Latin verses, which were translated and repeated all over Europe.

Jane Gray, whose elevation to the throne was only a step to the scaffold, read before her death, in *Greek*, Plato's Dialogue on the Immortality of the Soul.

The eldest daughter of the illustrious chancellor Sir Thomas More, was a wise and amiable lady. Her learning was almost eclipsed by her virtues. She corresponded in *Latin* with the great Erasmus, who styled her the ornament of Briton. After she had consoled her father in prison, had rushed through the guards to snatch a last embrace, had obtained the liberty of paying him funeral honours, had purchased his head with gold—she was herself loaded with fetters for *two crimes*—for having kept the head of her father as a relic, and for having preserved his books and writings. She appeared before her judges with intrepidity; justified herself with that eloquence which virtue bestows on injured merit, commanded admiration and respect, and passed the rest of her life in retirement, in melancholy, and in study.

We behold in Scotland, Mary Stuart, heir of that crown, the most beautiful woman of her age, and one of the most learned, who could write and speak *six* languages, who made elegant verses in French, and who, when very young, delivered an oration in Latin, to the court of France, to prove that the study of letters is consistent with the female character. So lovely and so happy an example of the truth which she advanced, could not fail to convince. Mary added to her learning a delicate taste in the polite arts, par-

ticularly music, and adorned the whole with the most feminine courtly manners.

What has since been called *society* was not then indeed so much known. Luxury, and the want of occupation, had not introduced the custom of sitting five or six hours before a glass to invent fashions. Some use was made of time. Hence that variety of languages, arts and sciences, which were acquired by women.

It is but just, however, to observe, that the vanity of undertaking every thing is peculiar to the infancy of letters. In childhood, all the world over-rate their powers. It is only by measuring them that we come to know them. The desires themselves were then more easily satisfied than the thirst of learning. People were more anxious to know than to think; and the mind, more active than extended, was unable to comprehend the secrets, or reach the depth of the sciences.

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## CHAPTER XXIII.

### *Of the European Women.*

IN all polished nations, chastity has ever been esteemed the principle ornament of the female character. For this virtue the European ladies are very eminent. Their conduct is influenced by a veneration for that purity of manners and of character, so strongly inculcated by the precepts of the Christian religion. We may justly assert that Europe, in

general, is more famous for the chastity and other good qualities of its women, than any other part of the globe.

The virtues of modesty and chastity, however; do not flourish most, where they are attempted to be forced upon the women by locks, bars and governates, as in Spain; nor where unrestrained liberty and politeness are carried to the greatest length, as in France and Italy; but rather where refinement is not arrived so far, as to reckon every restraint upon inclination a mark of ill-breeding.

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## CHAPTER XXIV.

### *Of the French Women.*

THOUGH the ladies of France are not very handsome, they are sensible and witty. To many of them, without the least flattery, may be applied the distich which Sappho ascribes to herself :

“ Si mihi difficilis formam natura negavit,  
 “ Ingenio formæ damna rependo meæ.”

*If partial nature has denied me beauty, the charms of my mind amply make up for the deficiency.*

No woman upon earth can excel, and few rival them, in their almost native arts of pleasing all who approach them. Add to this, an education beyond that of most European ladies, a consummate skill in those accomplishments that suit the fair sex, and the most

graceful manner of displaying that knowledge to the utmost advantage.

Such is the description that may safely be given of the French ladies in general. But the spirit, or rather the *evil genius* of gallantry, too often perverts all these lovely qualities, and renders them subservient to very iniquitous ends.

In every country, women have always a little to do, and a great deal to say. In France, they dictate almost every thing that is said, and direct every thing that is done.— They are the most restless beings in the world. To fold her hands in idleness, and impose silence on her tongue, would be to a French woman worse than death. The sole joy of her life is to be engaged in the prosecution of some scheme, relating either to fashion, ambition or love.

Among the rich and opulent, they are entirely the votaries of pleasure, which they pursue through all its labyrinths, at the expense of fortune, reputation and health.— Giddy and extravagant to the last degree, they leave to their husbands economy and care, which would only spoil their complexions and furrow their brows.

When we descend to tradesmen and mechanics, the case is reversed; the wife manages every thing in the house and shop, while the husband lounges in the back-shop an idle spectator, or struts about with his sword and bag-wig.

Matrimony among the French, seems to be a bargain entered into by a male and female

to bear the same name, live in the same house, and pursue their separate pleasures without restraint or control. And, so religiously is this part of the bargain kept, that both parties shape their course exactly as convenience and inclination dictate.

There is no part of the world, however, where the company of men of letters is more acceptable to the fair sex than in France.— This circumstance diffuses knowledge among the women, gives an elegance and cheerfulness to the men, and renders them men of the world as well as of learning. So great is female influence over literature, as well as over every other thing in France, that by far the most considerable part of the productions of the press are calculated for their capacity.

In no country does real politeness shew itself more than in France, where the company of the women is accessible to every man who can recommend himself by his dress, and by his address. To affectation and prudery the French women are equally strangers. Easy and unaffected in their manners, their politeness has so much the appearance of nature, that one would almost believe no part of it to be the effect of art. An air of sprightliness and gaiety sets perpetually on their countenances, and their whole deportment seems to indicate that their only business is to “strew the path of life with flowers.” Persuasion hangs on their lips; and, though their volubility of tongue is indefatigable, so soft is their accent, so lively their expression, so va-

rious their attitudes, that they fix the attention for hours together on a tale of nothing.

The Jewish doctors have a fable concerning the etymology of the word Eve, which one would almost be tempted to say is realized in the French women. "Eve," say they, "comes from a word, which signifies to talk; and she was so called, because, soon after the creation, there fell from Heaven twelve baskets full of chit-chat, and she picked up *nine* of them, while her husband was gathering the other *three*."

The wind, or the fashions which she follows, are hardly more inconsistent than a French lady's mind. Her sole joy is in the number of her admirers, and her sole pride in changing them as often as possible. Over the whole of them she exercises the most absolute power, and they are zealously attentive even to prevent her wishes, by performing whatever they think she has any inclination to. Their time, their interest and activity, are wholly devoted to her will, or rather to her caprice. Even the purse, that most inaccessible thing about a Frenchman, must pour out its last sous, at the call of his mistress. Should he fail in this particular, he would immediately be discarded from her train, with the disgrace of having preferred Mercury to Venus.

While a French woman is able to drink at the stream of pleasure, she is generally an atheist. As her taste for that diminishes, she becomes gradually religious; and when she

has lost it altogether, is the most bigotted devotee.

Upon the whole, French females rather sacrifice too much of their delicacy to wit, and of their chastity to good breeding. They pay too little regard to their character, and too much to a ridiculous opinion that fashionable people are above it. They are too much the creatures of art, and have almost discarded nature as much from their feelings as from their faces.

To what has been said on this subject, I shall only add the following entertaining description of French gallantry, and French manners.

"A Frenchman," says an ingenious writer; "piques himself upon being polished above the natives of any other country, by his conversation with the fair sex. In the course of this communication, with which he is indulged from his tender years, he learns, like a parrot, by rote, the whole circle of French compliments, which are a set of phrases, ridiculous even to a proverb; and these he throws out indiscriminately to all women without distinction, in the exercise of that kind of address, which is here distinguished by the name of gallantry. It is an exercise, by the repetition of which he becomes very pert, very familiar, and very impertinent.

"A Frenchman, in consequence of his mingling with the females from his infancy, not only becomes acquainted with all their customs and humors, but grows wonderfully alert in performing a thousand little offices, which



are overlooked by other men, whose time has been spent in making more valuable acquisitions. He enters, without ceremony a lady's bed chamber, attends her at her toilette, regulates the distribution of her patches, and advises where to lay on the paint. If he visits her when she is dressed, and perceives the least impropriety in her coiffure, he insists upon adjusting it with his own hands. If he sees a curl, or even a single hair amiss, he produces his comb, his scissars, and pomatum, and sets it to rights with the dexterity of a professed friseur. He squires her to every place she visits, either on business or pleasure; and by dedicating his whole time to her, renders himself necessary to her occasions. In short, of all the coxcombs on the face of the earth, a French petit-maitre is the most impertinent. And they are all petits-maitres, from the marquis who glitters in lace and embroidery, to the garcon barbiere (barber's boy) covered with meal, who struts with his hair in a long queue, and his hat under his arm.

"I shall only mention one custom more, which seems to carry human affectation to the very farthest verge of folly and extravagance: that is, the manner in which the faces of the ladies are primed and painted. It is generally supposed that part of the fair sex, in some other countries, make use of fard and vermillion for very different purposes; namely, to help a bad or faded complexion, to heighten the graces, or conceal the defects of nature, as well as of the ravages of time. I shall not inquire whether it is just

and honest to impose in this manner on mankind. If it is not honest, it may be allowed to be artful and politic, and shows, at least, a desire of being agreeable. But to lay it on as the fashion in France prescribes to all the ladies of condition, who indeed cannot appear without this badge of distinction, is to disguise themselves in such a manner as to render them odious and detestible to every spectator who has the least relish left for nature and propriety.

As for the fard, or white, with which their necks and shoulders are plaistered, it may be in some measure excusable, as their skins are naturally brown or sallow. But the rouge which is daubed on their faces, from the chin up to the eyes, without the least art or dexterity, not only destroys all distinction of features, but renders the aspect really frightful, or at least conveys nothing but ideas of disgust and aversion. Without this horrible mask, no married lady is admitted at court, or in any polite assembly ; and it is a mark of distinction which none of the lower classes dare assume."

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## CHAPTER XXV.

### *Of the Italian Women.*

THE elegant author Dr. Goldsmith thus characterises the Italians in general :

" Could nature's bounty satisfy the breast,  
The sons of Italy were surely blest.

Whatever fruits in different climes are found,  
That proudly rise, or humbly court the ground;  
Whatever blooms in torrid tracts appear,  
Whose bright succession decks the varied  
year :

Whatever sweets salute the northern sky,  
With vernal leaves that blossom but to die :  
These here disporting, own the kindred soil,  
Nor ask luxuriance from their planter's toil ;  
While sea-born gales their gelid wings ex-  
pand,

To winnow fragrance round the smiling land.

“ But small the bliss that sense alone be-  
stows,

And sensual blise is all the nation knows.

In florid beauty groves and fields appear,

Man seems the only growth that dwindles  
here.

Contrasted faults thro' all his manners reign ;

Though poor, luxurious ; though submis-  
sive, vain ;

Though grave, yet trifling ; zealous, yet un-  
true ;

And e'en in penance planning sins anew.

All evils here contaminate the mind,

That opulence departed leaves behind :

For wealth was theirs, not far remov'd the  
date,

When commerce proudly flourish'd thro' the  
state ;

At her command the palace learn'd to rise,

Again the long-fall'n column sought the skies ;

The canvas glow'd, beyond e'en nature warm ;

The pregnant quarry teem'd with human form,

Till, more unsteady than the southern gale,

Commerce on other shores display'd her sail ;  
While naught remain'd of all that riches gave,  
But towns unmann'd, and lords without a  
slave ;

And late the nation found, with fruitless  
skill,

Its former strength was but plethoric ill.

“ Yet still the loss of wealth is here supplied

By arts, the splendid wrecks of former pride ;  
From these the feeble heart and long-fall'n  
mind

An easy compensation seem to find.

Here may be seen in bloodless pomp array'd,  
The pasteboard triumph, and the cavalcade :  
Processions form'd for piety and love,  
A mistress or a saint in every grove.”

Almost every traveller who has visited Italy, agrees in describing it as the most abandoned of all the countries of Europe. At Venice, at Naples, and indeed in almost every part of Italy, women are taught from their infancy the various arts of alluring to their arms the young and unwary, and of obtaining from them, while heated by love or wine, every thing that flattery and false smiles can obtain, in these unguarded moments.

The Italian ladies are not quite so gay and volatile as the French, nor do they so much excite the risibility of the spectator ; but by the softness of their language, and their manner, they more forcibly engage the heart. They are not so much theameleon or the weather cock, but have some decent degree of permanency in their connections, whether

of love or friendship. With regard to jealousy, they are so far from being careless and indifferent, in that respect, as the French are, that they often suffer it to transport them to the most unwarrantable actions.

The Italian women are far preferable to the French in point of exterior charms ; but their education is, in general, most scandalously neglected. Those accomplishments, which render the ladies in England and in France, so acceptable in company, are but rarely found among the Italians, who depend chiefly on their native subtlety and finesse, to ingratiate themselves with such as they deem worthy of their notice.

Love, in Italy, meets with very small encouragement from the great. That innocent, pure and sentimental passion, which the sanction of strictest virtue authorises, is almost obliterated among them. The sordid motives, which to the disgrace of most nations, have so much undue influence over them in their matrimonial connections, are still much more infamously prevalent among the nobility and gentry of Italy.

An Italian female of birth and fortune, bred in the prison of a cloister, is brought forth, when marriageable, to receive her sentence ; and conducted like a victim to the altar, there to be made a sacrifice to a man of whom she hardly knows the face. Among them, we find none of those antecedent homages of a lover, none of those engaging proofs of attachment, which only can secure a reciprocation. In short, no medium of courtship in-

tervenes, and therefore no opportunity is given to create an affection on either side.

There exists in Italy a species of beings unknown throughout the rest of Europe; who, though their rise be not remotely distant, have wrought a change in the temper and manners of the Italians, that renders them, in some respects, a people totally different from what they were a century ago.— These beings are well known by the name *cicisbeys*, and may be considered in the light of assistants and substitutes to those men of fashion who have entered into the matrimonial state, and whose fair partners require more attendance, than they are willing, or than their occupations and affairs will allow them to give. This institution appears an admirable relief to those young gentlemen, who are afraid, from sundry motives, to venture on a wife, and yet are unwilling to renounce the soft amusements resulting from the society of a female companion.

Hence at first sight, this employment of a *cicisbey* may seem delightful to persons of a dissolute and libertine disposition; but many a one, who sought it with all the eagerness of inexperience, has heartily regretted the day of his admission to a servitude, which robs him of every moment of his liberty, and gives the lady, under whose banners he has enlisted himself, an absolute command of his person, his time, his means, his credit, and whatever he can call his own. An Italian woman knows no reserves; and he that pretends to her good graces must divest himself

of his will and passions, and make an entire sacrifice of them to her caprice. Thus a cicisbey is a perfect slave; and though no favours are denied him, yet the price he pays is far beyond the value he receives, when we reflect that he barter for it the peace of his mind, and the prosperity of his circumstances: as it very often happens that advancements in life are retarded, and sometimes totally frustrated, through the impediments thrown in the way of activity by the attentions a lady insists upon from him, who, by the fatal office he has accepted, has bound himself to perpetual slavery.

But if such a connection, viewed only in a light of pleasure and gallantry, is so very far from answering the expectations even of the man of mere pleasure, it still displays a more shocking picture, when we examine it according to the rules of *morality*, as it radically destroys the very first principles on which the reciprocal happiness of the sexes is founded, by introducing into the wedded state a mutual indifference or contempt.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

*Of the Spanish Women.*

AS the Spanish ladies are under a greater seclusion from general society, than the sex is in other European countries, their desires of an adequate degree of liberty are consequently more strong and urgent. A free and open communication being denied them, they make it their business to secure themselves a secret and hidden one. Hence it is that Spain is the country of intrigue.

The Spanish women are little or nothing indebted to education. But nature has liberally supplied them with a fund of wit and sprightliness, which is certainly no small inducement to those, who have only transient glimpses of their charms, to wish very earnestly for a removal of those impediments, that obstruct their more frequent presence.— This not being attainable in a lawful way of customary intercourse, the natural propensity of men to overcome difficulties of this kind, incites them to leave no expedient untried to gain admittance to what perhaps was at first only the object of their admiration, but which by their being refused an innocent gratification of that passion, becomes at last the subject of a more serious one. Thus in Spain, as in all countries where the sex is kept much out of sight, the thoughts of men are continually employed in devising methods to break into their concealments.



There is in the Spaniards a native dignity ; which, though the source of many inconveniences, has nevertheless this salutary effect, that it sets them above almost every species of meanness and infidelity. This quality is not peculiar to the men ; it diffuses itself, in a great measure, among the women also.— Its effects are visible both in their constancy in love and friendship, in which respects they are the very reverse of the French women. Their affections are not to be gained by a bit of sparkling lace, or a tawdry set of liveries ; nor are they to be lost by the appearance of still finer. Their deportment is rather grave and reserved ; and, on the whole, they have much more of the prude than the coquette in their composition. Being more confined at home, and less engaged in business and pleasure, they take more care of their children than the French, and have a becoming tenderness in their disposition to all animals, except an *heretic* and a *rival*.

Something more than a century ago, the Marquis D'Astogas having prevailed on a young woman of great beauty to become his mistress, the Marchioness hearing of it, went to her lodging with some assassins, killed her, tore out her heart, carried it home, made a *ragout* of it, and presented the dish to the Marquis. "It is exceedingly good," said he, "No wonder," answered she, "since it was made of the *heart* of that creature you so much doated on." And, to confirm what she had said, she immediately drew out her head all bloody from beneath her hoop, and rolled

it on the floor, her eyes sparkling all the time with a mixture of pleasure and infernal fury.

The Spaniards are indulgent almost beyond measure to their women; and there are several situations in which they take every advantage of this indulgence. A kept mistress has, by indisputable custom, a right to a new suit of clothes, according to the quality of her keeper, as often as she is blooded. She need only feign a slight illness, and be on a proper footing with the doctor, to procure this as often as she pleases.

A lady to whom a gentleman pays his addresses, is sole mistress of his time and money; and, should he refuse her any request, whether reasonable or capricious, it would reflect eternal dishonour upon him among the men, and make him the detestation of all the women.

But in no situation does their character appear so whimsical, or their power so conspicuous, as when they are pregnant. In this case, whatever they long for, whatever they ask, or whatever they have an inclination to do, they must be indulged in.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

*Of the English Women.*

THE women of England are eminent for many good qualities both of the head and of the heart. There we meet with that inexpressible softness and delicacy of manners, which, cultivated by education, appears as much superior to what it does without it, as the polished diamond appears superior to that which is rough from the mine. In some parts of the world, women have attained to so little knowledge, and so little consequence, that we consider their virtues as merely of the negative kind. In England they consist not only in abstinence from evil, but in doing good.

There we see the sex every day exerting themselves in acts of benevolence and charity, in relieving the distresses of the body, and binding up the wounds of the mind ; in reconciling the differences of friends, and preventing the strife of enemies ; and, to sum up all, in that care and attention to their offspring, which is so necessary and essential a part of their duty.

With regard to the English ladies, Mr. Grosley, a French writer, makes the following just, and very favorable remarks: "That sex," says he, "is, in its present state, just such as one could wish it to be, in order to form the felicity of wedlock. Their serious and thoughtful disposition, by rendering them sedentary, attaches them to their husbands, to their children, and the care of their houses.

They, for the most part, nurse their own children themselves : and this custom, which gains ground every day, is a new tie of affection to the mothers.

“ The English women are by no means indifferent about public affairs. Their interesting themselves in these, gives a new pleasure to social life. The husband always finds at home somebody to whom he can open himself, and converse as long and as earnestly as he thinks proper, upon those subjects which he has most at heart.

“ At an assembly composed of both sexes, a lady asked me whether I still had many curiosities and objects of observation to visit in London : I made answer that there was still one of great importance left for me to know, and that she and her company could give me all the information I desired : this was, whether, in England, the husband or the wife *governed* the house ? My question being explained to all the ladies present, they discussed it, and amused themselves with it ; and the answer which they agreed should be returned to me was, that husbands alone could *resolve* it. I then proposed it to the husbands, who, with one voice declared that they durst not decide.

“ The perplexity discovered by those gentlemen, gave me the solution I desired. In fact the English ladies and wives, with the most mild and gentle tone, and with an air of indifference, coldness, and languor, exercise a power equally despotic over both husbands and lovers ; a power so much the more per-

manent, as it is established and supported by a complaisance and submissiveness, from which they rarely depart.

“This complaisance, this submission, and this mildness, are happy virtues of constitution, which nature has given them, to serve as a sort of mask to all that is most haughty, proud, and impetuous, in the English character.

“To the gifts of nature add the charm of beauty, which is very common in England. With regard to graces, the English women have those which accompany beauty, and not those artificial graces that cannot supply its place ; those transient graces, which are not the same to-day as yesterday ; those graces, which are not so much the objects themselves, as in the eye of the spectator, who has often found it difficult to discover them.”

Indeed, almost all foreigners, on their arrival here, manifest their consciousness of the superior comeliness of our women, by making it the continual topic of their conversation ; and though some of them are not willing to exclude from the right of comparison the females of their own country, yet their cause is espoused with so much faintness, that one may easily perceive it is only done by way of saving their honour, and enabling them to make a sort of decent retreat from the field of contention, where they well know they could not maintain their ground, and therefore wisely avoid much discourse on that subject.

Strangers unanimously agree in their descriptions of our English ladies, with whose

gentleness of temper and unfeigned modesty they seem chiefly to be captivated ; and invariably concur in representing them of a decent, unaffected deportment, and of a tender, affectionate disposition.

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## CHAPTER XXVIII.

### *Of the Russian Women.*

IT is only a few years since the Russians emerged from a state of barbarity.

A late empress of Russia, as a punishment for some female frailties, ordered a most beautiful young lady of family to be publicly chastised, in a manner which was hardly less indelicate than severe.

It is said that the Russian ladies were formerly as submissive to their husbands in their families, as the latter are to their superiors in the field ; and that they thought themselves ill treated, if they were not often reminded of their duty by the discipline of a *whip*, manufactured by themselves, which they presented to their husbands on the day of their marriage. The latest travellers, however, assert, that they find no remaining traces of this custom at present.

Their nuptial ceremonies are peculiar to themselves ; and formerly consisted of many whimsical rites, many of which are now disused. On her wedding-day, the bride is crowned with a garland of wormwood ; and, after the priest has tied the nuptial knot, his

clerk or sexton throws a handful of hops upon the head of the bride, wishing that she might prove as fruitful as that plant. She is then led home, with abundance of coarse ceremonies, which are now wearing off even among the lowest ranks ; and the barbarous treatment of wives by their husbands is either guarded against by the laws of the country, or by particular stipulations in the marriage contract.

In the conversation and actions of the Russian ladies, there is hardly any thing of that softness and delicacy which distinguish the sex in other parts of Europe. Even their exercises and diversions have more of the masculine than the feminine. The present empress, with the ladies of her court, sometimes divert themselves by shooting at a mark. Drunkenness, the vice of almost every cold climate, they are so little ashamed of, that not many years ago, when a lady got drunk at the house of a friend, it was customary for her to return next day, and thank him for the pleasure he had done her.

Females, however, in Russia, possess several advantages. They share the rank and splendor of the families from which they are sprung, and are even allowed the supreme authority. This at present, is enjoyed by an empress, whose head does honour to her nation and to her sex ; although, on some occasions, the virtues of her heart have been much suspected. The sex, in general, are protected from insult by many salutary laws ; and, except among the peasants, are exempted from every

kind of toil and slavery. Upon the whole, they seem to be approaching fast to the enjoyment of that consequence, to which they have already arrived in several parts of Europe.

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## CHAPTER XXIX.

### *Of the German Women.*

OF all the German females, the ladies of Saxony are the most amiable. Their persons are so superiorly charming and preferable in whatever can recommend them to the notice of mankind, that the German youth often visit Saxony in quest of *companions* for life. Exclusive of their beauty and comeliness of appearance, they are brought up in the knowledge of all those arts, both useful and ornamental, which are so brilliant an addition to their native attractions. But what chiefly enhances their value, and gives it reality and duration, is a *sweetness* of temper and festivity of disposition, that never fail to endear them on a very slight acquaintance. To crown all, they generally become *patterns* of conjugal tenderness and fidelity.

As they are commonly careful to improve their minds by reading and instructive conversation, they have no small share of facetiousness and ingenuity. From their innate liveliness, they are extremely addicted to all the gay kind of amusements. They excel in the allurements of dress and decoration, and are in general skilful in music.



The character, however, of the women in most other parts of Germany, particularly of the Austrian, is very different from this. Notwithstanding the advantages of size and make, their looks and features, though not unsightly, betray a vacancy of that life and spirit, without which beauty is uninteresting, and, like a mere picture, becomes utterly void of that indication of sensibility, which alone can awaken a delicacy of feeling.

As their education is conducted by the rules of the grossest superstition, and they are taught little else than set forms of devotion, they arrive to the years of maturity uninstructed in the use of reason, and usually continue profoundly ignorant the remainder of their days, which are spent, or rather loitered away, in apathy and indolence.

Having learned none of the ingenuous methods of making time sit lightly, their hours of leisure, which their inactivity swells to a large amount, are heavy and oppressive; and, from their want of almost all sort of knowledge, the subjects of their discourse are poor and insipid, to a great degree. So irksome, even to themselves, is that kind of society which consists in a communication of thoughts, that dress and diversion are the only refuge from the tediousness which hangs over the general tenour of their lives. But whatever they attempt in either, shews an absence of all taste and elegance, such as one may naturally expect from the poverty and barrenness of their fancy. In these two articles, indeed,

they are obliged to borrow from abroad all that is tolerable.

The principal happiness of the Austrian ladies of fashion consists in ruminating on the dignity of their birth and families, the antiquity of their race, the rank they hold, the respect attached to it, and the prerogatives they enjoy over the inferior classes, whom they treat with the utmost superciliousness, and hold in the most unreasonable contempt. In the mean time, their domestic affairs are condemned to the most unaccountable neglect. They dwell at home, careless of what passes there; and suffer disorder and confusion to prevail, without feeling the least uneasiness. Great frequenters of churches, their piety consists in the strictest conformity to all the externals of religion. They profess the most boundless belief in all the silly legends with which their treatises of devotion are filled; and these are the only books they ever read. The coldness of their constitution occasions a species of regulated gallantry, which is rather the effect of an opinion that it is an appendage of high life, than the result of their natural inclination.

It must at the same time be allowed, that the Austrian women are endowed with a great fund of sincerity and candour; and, though too much on the reserve, and prone to keep at an unnecessary distance, and yet capable of the truest attachment, and always warm and zealous in the cause of those whom they have admitted to their friendship.

Though the Germans are rather a dull and

phlegmatic people, and not greatly enslaved by the warmer passions, yet at the court of Vienna they are much given to intrigue: and an amour is so far from being scandalous, that a woman gains credit by the rank of her gallant; and is reckoned silly and unfashionable if she scrupulously adheres to the virtue of chastity. But such customs are more the customs of courts, than of places less exposed to temptation, and consequently less dissolute; and we are well assured that in Germany there are many women who do honour to humanity, not by chastity only, but also by a variety of other virtues.

The ladies at the principal courts, differ not much in their dress from the French and English. They are not, however, so excessively fond of paint as the former. At some courts, they appear in rich furs; and all of them are loaded with jewels, if they can obtain them. The female part of the burgher's families, in many of the German towns, dress in a very different manner, and some of them inconceivably fantastic, as may be seen in many prints published in books of travels. But, in this respect, they are gradually reforming, and many of them make quite a different appearance in their dress from what they did thirty or forty years ago.

The inhabitants of Vienna live luxuriously, a great part of their time being spent in feasting and carousing. In winter, when the different branches of the Danube are frozen over, and the ground covered with snow, the ladies take their recreation in sledges of dif-

ferent shapes, such as griffins, tygers, swans, scallop-shells, &c. Here the lady sits, dressed in velvet lined with rich furs and adorned with laces and jewels, having on her head a velvet cap. The sledge is drawn by one horse, stag or other creature, set off with plumes of feathers, ribbands and bells. As this diversion is taken chiefly in the night time, servants ride before the sledge with torches; and a gentleman, standing on the sledge behind, guides the horse.



## CHAPTER XXX.

### *Of the Comparative Merit of the two Sexes.*

THE difference of duties, of occupations, and of manners, must certainly have a considerable influence on the genius, on the sentiments, and on the character of the two sexes.

In comparing the intellectual powers of men and women, it is necessary to distinguish between the philosophical talent, which thinks and discriminates; the talent of memory, which collects; the talent of imagination, which creates; the moral and political talent, which governs. It is also necessary to inquire to what degree women possess these four kinds of genius.

The philosophical spirit is rare indeed, even among men. But still there are many great men who have possessed it; who have raised themselves to the height of nature, to become acquainted with her works; who

have shewn to the soul the source of its ideas ; who have assigned to reason its bounds, to motion its laws, and to the universe its harmony ; who have created sciences in creating principles ; and who have aggrandized the human mind in cultivating their own. If there is a woman found on a level with these illustrious men, is it the fault of education or of nature ?

Descartes, abused by envious men, but admired by two generous princesses, boasted of the philosophical talents of women. We must not, however, imagine that his gratitude could lead him into a voluntary error, even in compliment to beauty. He would no doubt find in Elizabeth, and in Christiana, a docility which prided itself in listening to so great a man, and which seemed to associate itself with his genius, in following the train of his ideas. He might perhaps even find, in the compositions of women, perspicuity, order, and method. But did he find that strong *discernment*, that depth of intellect, that diffidence, which characterises the real philosopher ? Did he find that cool reason, which, always inquisitive, advances slowly, and re-measures all its steps ?—Their genius, penetrating and rapid, flies off, and is at rest. They have more sallies than efforts. What they do not see at once, they seldom see at all ; they either *disdain* or despair to comprehend it. They are not possessed of that unremitting *assiduity*, which alone can pursue and discover important truths.

Imagination seems rather to be their *province*. It has been observed, that the imagination of women has in it something unaccountably singular and extraordinary. All things strike it; all things paint themselves on it, in a lively manner. Their volatile senses embrace every object, and carry off its images. Some *unknown* powers, some secret sympathies, enable them rapidly to seize the impressions. The material world is not sufficient for them; they love to create an *ideal* world of their own, which they embellish, and in which they dwell. Spectres, enchantments, prodigies, and whatever transcends the ordinary laws of nature, are their creation and their delight. They enjoy even their *terrors*. Their feelings are fine, and their fancy always approaches to enthusiasm.

But how far, it may be asked, can the imagination of females, when applied to the arts, unfold itself in the talent of creating and describing? Is their imagination as vigorous as it is lively and versatile? Does it not unavoidably partake of their occupations, of their pleasures, of their tastes, and even of their weaknesses? Perhaps their delicate fibres are afraid of strong sensations, which fatigue them, and make them seek the sweets which would give them repose.

Man, always active, is exposed to storms. The imagination of the poet enjoys itself on the ridge of mountains, on the brink of volcanos, in the middle of ruins, on seas and in fields of battle; and it is never more suscep-

tible of tender ideas, than after having experienced some great emotion.

But women, by means of their delicate and sedentary life, less acquainted with the contrast of the *gentle* and the *terrible*, may be supposed to feel and to paint less perfectly, even that which is agreeable, than those who are thrown into contrary situations, and pass rapidly from one sensation to another.

Perhaps too, from the habit of resigning themselves to the impression of the moment, which with them is very strong, their minds must be more replenished with images than pictures. Or probably their imagination, though lively, resembles a mirror, which reflects every thing, but creates nothing.

Love is, without dispute, the passion which women feel the strongest, and which they express the best. They feel the other passions more feebly, and, as it were, by chance. But love is their own; it is the charm and the business of their life; it is their soul. They should therefore know well how to paint it.

But do they know, like the author of *Othello*, of *Revenge*; or of *Zara*, to express the transports of a troubled soul, which joins fury to love; which is sometimes impetuous, and sometimes tender; which now is softened, and now is roused; which sheds blood, and which sacrifices itself? Can they paint these doublings of the human heart, these storms of emotion and passion?—No; nature herself restrains them. Love in the one sex is a conquest, in the other a sacrifice.

It must, therefore, generally happen that the women of all countries, and in all ages know better how to paint a delicate and tender sentiment, than a violent and turbulent passion.

And, besides, by their duty, by the reserve of their sex, by the desire of a certain grace which softens all their expressions, is more bewitching than wit, and more attractive than beauty, they are obliged always to *conceal* a part of their sentiments. Must not then these sentiments, by being continually restrained, become weaker by degrees, and have less energy than those of men, who at all times bold and extravagant with impunity, give to their passions what tone they please, and which are invigorated by exercise?

A temporary constraint inflames the passions; but a continued constraint cools or extinguishes them.

With regard to the talent of order and memory, which classes facts, and ideas, when necessary, as it depends a good deal upon method and habit, there seems little reason why the two sexes may not possess it in an equal degree. But are not women sooner disgusted with the excess of labour, which is necessary in order to acquire the quantity of materials from which erudition results?—Must not their impatience and natural desire of change, which arise from fleeting and rapid impressions, prevent them from following, for a course of years, the same kind of study, and consequently from acquiring profound or extensive knowledge? Though this may be



the case, they certainly have qualities of mind which atone for it. It is not the same hand which *polishes* the diamond, and which *digs* the mine.

We come now to a more important object, the political or moral abilities, which consist in the direction of ourselves or of others.—In order to weigh upon this subject, the advantages or disadvantages peculiar to each sex, it is necessary to distinguish between the use of these abilities in society, and their use in government.

As women set a high value upon opinion, they must, by consequence, very attentively consider what it is which produces, destroys or confirms it. They must know how far one may direct, without appearing to be interested; how far one may presume upon that art, even after it is known; in what estimation they are held by those with whom they live; and to what degree it is necessary to *serve* them, that they may govern them.

In all matters of business, women know the great effects which are produced by little causes. They have the art of imposing upon some, by seeming to discover to them what they already know; and of diverting others from their purpose, by confirming their most distant suspicions. They know how to captivate by praises those who merit them; and to raise a blush, by bestowing them where they are not due.

These delicate sciences are the *leading-strings* in which the women conduct the men. Society to them is like a harpsichord, of

which they know the touches ; and they can guess at the sound which every touch will produce. But man, impetuous and free, supplying the want of address by strength, and consequently being less interested to observe, hurried away, besides, by the necessity of continual action—can scarcely be possessed of all those little *notices*, and polite attentions, which are every moment necessary in the commerce of life. Their calculations, therefore, on society, must be more slow, and less sure, than those of women.

Let us now take a view of that species of understanding, in the two sexes, which is applicable to government.

In society, women govern men by their passions, and the smallest motives often produce the greatest consequences. But, in the government of states, it is by comprehensive views, by the choice of principles, and, above all, by the discovery and the employment of talents, that success can be obtained. Here, instead of taking advantage of foibles, they must fear them. They must raise men above their weaknesses. and not lead them into them.

In society, therefore, the art of governing may be said to consist in flattering characters with address ; and the art of administration, in combating them with judgment. The knowledge of mankind required in the two cases is very different. In the one, they must be known by their weakness ; in the other, by their strength. The one draws forth defects for little ends ; the other discovers great.

qualities, which are mingled with those very faults. The one, in short, seeks little blemishes in great men; and the other, in dissecting great men, must often perceive the same spots; for *perfect* characters exist only in Utopia.

Let us now inquire whether this species of understanding and observation belongs equally to the two sexes.

There are women who *have* reigned, and who *still* reign with lustre. Christiana in Sweden, Isabella of Castile in Spain, and Elizabeth in England, have merited the esteem of their age and posterity.

We saw, in the war of 1741, a princess, whom even her enemies admired, defend the German empire with no less genius than courage, and we lately beheld the Ottoman empire shaken by a woman. But in general questions, we should beware of taking exceptions for rules, and observe the ordinary course of nature.

It therefore becomes necessary to enquire, whether women, who, according to the mode of society, neither are, nor have in their power to be, so often in action as men, can so well judge of talents, their use, or their extent; whether great views, and the application of great principles, with the habit of perceiving consequences with the glance of an eye, are compatible with their wandering imagination, and with minds so little accustomed to the arrangement of their ideas. All this is necessary to form the character which

governs. It is the vigour of the soul which gives activity to genius, which extends and which strengthens political ideas. This character, however, can hardly be formed but by great commotions, great hopes, and great fears, as also the necessity of being continually engaged in action.

Is it not in general, the character of women, that their minds are more pleasing than strong? Does not their rapid imagination, which often makes sentiment precede thought, render them, in the choice of men, more susceptible both to prejudice, and of error? Would not one be in danger of abuse, would not one even run the risk of their displeasure, if he should say that, in the distribution of their esteem, they would set too high a value upon external accomplishments; and, in short, they would perhaps be too easily led to believe that an *agreeable* man was a *great* man?

Elizabeth was not free from this censure. The inclinations of her sex stole beneath the cares of the throne, and the greatness of her character. We are chagrined, at certain times, to see the little weaknesses of a woman mingle with the views of a great mind.

This taste for coquetry, as is well known, furnished Elizabeth with favourites, in the choice of which she judged more like a *woman* than like a *sovereign*. She was always too ready to believe, that the power of pleasing her, implied genius.

That so much celebrated queen exercised over England an almost arbitrary sway; at

which, perhaps, we ought not to be surprised. Women, in general, on the throne, are more inclined to *despotism*, and more impatient of restraint, than men. The sex to whom nature has assigned power, by giving them strength, have a certain confidence which raises them in their own eyes; so that they have no need of manifesting to themselves that superiority of which they are sure. But weakness, astonished at the sway which she possesses, shakes her sceptre on every side, to establish her dominion.

Great men are perhaps more carried to that species of despotism which arises from lofty ideas; and women, above the ordinary class, to the despotism which proceeds from passion. The last is rather a sally of the heart, than the effect of system.

One thing which favours the despotism of female sovereigns is, that the men confound the empire of their sex with that of their rank. What we refuse to grandeur, we pay to beauty. But the dominion of women, even when arbitrary, is seldom cruel. Theirs is rather a despotism of caprice, than of oppression. The throne itself cannot cure their sensibility. They carry in their bosoms the counterpoise of their power.

Hence it follows, that in limited monarchies, female sovereigns will tend to despotism from their jealousy; and in absolute government, will approach to monarchy by their mildness. This observation is proved by experience.

## CHAPTER XXXI.

*On the Religious and Domestic Virtues of Women.*

BOTH experience and history attest, that in all sects, in all countries, and in all ranks, the women have more religious virtues than the men. Naturally possessed of more sensibility, they have more occasion for an object which may constantly occupy their minds. Desirous of happiness, and not finding enough in this world, they launch into a life and a world abounding with ineffable delights. More flexible in their duties than men, they reason less, and feel more. More subjected to good opinion, they pay more attention to what concerns themselves. Less occupied, and less active, they have more time for contemplation. Less abstracted or absent, they are more strongly affected by the same idea, because it appears before them continually. More struck by external objects, they relish more the pageantry of ceremonies and of temples, and the devotion of the senses has no inconsiderable effect on that of the soul.

The domestic virtues are intimately connected with those of religion; they are doubtless common to both sexes. The advantage, however, seems still to be in favour of the women. At least they have more need of virtues which they have more occasion to practice.

In the first period of life, timid, and without support, the daughter is more attached to her mother. By seldom leaving her, she comes to love her more. The trembling innocent is cheered by the presence of her protectress; and her weakness, while it heightens her beauty, augments her sensibility.— After becoming a mother herself, she has other duties, which every thing invites her to fulfil. Then the condition of the two sexes is widely different.

Man, in the middle of his labours, and among his arts, employing his powers, and commanding nature, finds pleasure in his industry, in his success, and even in his toils. But woman, being more solitary, and less active, has fewer resources. Her pleasure must arise from her virtues; her amusements are her children. It is near the cradle of her infant; it is in viewing the smiles of her daughter, or the sports of her son, that a mother is happy.

Where are the tender feelings, the cries, the powerful emotions of nature? Where is the sentiment, at once sublime and pathetic, that carries every feeling to excess? Is it to be found in the frosty indifference, and the rigid severity of so many fathers? No; it is in the warm impassioned bosom of a mother. It is she who, by an impulse as quick as involuntary, rushes into the flood to snatch her child, whose imprudence had betrayed him to the waves! It is she who in the middle of a conflagration, throws herself across the flames to save her sleeping infant.

These great expressions of nature, these heart-rending emotions, which fill us at once with wonder, compassion and terror, always have belonged, and always will belong only to women. They possess, in those moments, an inexpressible something, which carries them beyond themselves. They seem to discover to us new souls, above the standard of humanity.

If we consider also the matrimonial duties, the obligations of husband and wife, which of the sexes is most likely to be faithful?—Which, in violating them, has most obstacles to encounter? Is not woman best defended by her education, by her reserve, and by that modesty which silences even her desires? To these restraints we may add the power of the first passion, and the first ties, over a heart endowed with sensibility.

Nature, herself, attentive in this instance to the manners of women, has taken care to surround them with the strongest, yet the gentlest barriers. She has made inconstancy more painful, and fidelity more pleasing to their hearts. Even in ages of general corruption, *conjugal* infidelity in women has been one of the last of crimes.



## CHAPTER XXXII.

*On Female Friendship.*

IT has long been a question, Which of the two sexes is most capable of friendship ? Montagne, who is so much celebrated for his knowledge of human nature, has given it positively against the women ; and his opinion has been generally embraced.

Friendship perhaps, in women, is more rare than among men ; but, at the same time, it must be allowed that where it is found, it is more tender.

Men, in general, have more of the parade than the graces of friendship. They often wound while they serve ; and their warmest sentiments are not very enlightened, with respect to those minute sentiments which are of so much value. But women have a refined sensibility, which makes them see every thing ; nothing escapes them. They divine the silent friendship ; they encourage the bashful or timid friendship ; they offer their sweetest consolations to friendship in distress. Furnished with finer instruments, they treat more delicately a wounded heart. They compose it, and prevent it from feeling its agonies. They know, above all, how to give value to a thousand things, which have no value in themselves.

We ought therefore, perhaps, to desire the friendship of a man upon great occasions ; but, for general happiness, we must prefer the friendship of a woman.

With regard to female intimacies, it may be taken for granted that there is no young woman who has not, or wishes not to have, a companion of her own sex, to whom she may unbosom herself on every occasion. That there are women capable of friendship with women, few impartial observers will deny. There have been many evident proofs of it, and those carried as far as seemed compatible with the imperfections of our common nature. It is, however, questioned by some; while others believe that it happens exceedingly seldom. Between married and unmarried women, it no doubt happens very often; whether it does so between those that are single, is not so certain. Young men appear more frequently susceptible of a generous and steady friendship for each other, than females as yet unconnected; especially, if the latter have, or are supposed to have, pretensions to beauty, not adjusted by the public.

In the frame and condition of females, however, compared with those of the other sex, there are some circumstances which may help towards an apology for this unfavourable feature in their character.

The state of matrimony is necessary to the support, order, and comfort of society. But it is a state that subjects the women to a great variety of solicitude and pain. Nothing could carry them through it with any tolerable satisfaction of spirit, but very strong and almost unconquerable attachments. To produce these, is it not fit they should be peculiarly sensible to the attention and regards of the

men ? Upon the same ground, does it not seem agreeable to the purposes of Providence, that the securing of this attention, and these regards, should be a principal aim ? But can such an aim be pursued without frequent competition ? And will not that too readily occasion jealousy, envy, and all the unamiable effects of mutual *rivalship* ? Without the restraints of superior worth and sentiment, it certainly will. But can these be ordinarily expected from the prevailing turn of female education ; or from the little pains that women, as well as other human beings, commonly take to *controul* themselves, and to act nobly ? In this *last* respect, the sexes appear pretty much on the same footing.

This reasoning is not meant to justify the indulgence of those little and sometimes base passions towards one another, with which females have been so generally charged. It is only intended to represent such passions in the first approach ; and, while not entertained, as less criminal than the men are apt to state them ; and to prove that, in their attachments to each other, the latter have not always that merit above the women, which they are apt to claim. In the mean time, let it be the business of the ladies, by emulating the gentlemen, where they appear good natured and disinterested, to disprove their imputation, and to shew a temper open to *friendship* as well as to *love*.

To talk much of the latter is natural for both ; to talk much of the former, is considered by the men as one way of doing them-

selves honour. Friendship, they well know, is that dignified form, which, in speculation at least, every heart must respect.

But in friendship, as in religion, which on many accounts it resembles, speculation is often substituted in the place of practice. People fancy themselves possessed of the thing, and hope that others will fancy so too, because they are fond of the name, and have learnt to talk about it with plausibility. Such talk indeed imposes, till experience gives it the lie.

To say the truth, there seems in either sex but little of what a fond imagination, unacquainted with the falsehood of the world, and warmed by affections which its selfishness has not yet chilled, would reckon friendship. In theory, the standard is raised too high ; we ought not, however, to wish it much lower. The honest sensibilities of ingenuous nature should not be checked by the over-cautious documents of political prudence. No advantage, obtained by such frigidity, can compensate for the want of those warm effusions of the heart into the bosom of a friend, which are doubtless among the most exquisite pleasures. At the same time, however, it must be owned, that they often by the inevitable lot of humanity, make way for the bitterest pains which the breast can experience. Happy beyond the common condition of her sex, is she who has found a friend indeed ; open hearted, yet discreet ; generously fervent, yet steady ; thoroughly virtuous, but not severe ; wise, as well as cheerful ! Can such a friend be lov-

ed too much, or cherished too tenderly ? If to excellence and happiness there be any one way more compendious than another, next to friendship with the Supreme Being, it is this.

But when a mixture of minds so beautiful and so sweet takes place, it is generally, or rather always the result of early prepossession, casual intercourse, or in short, a combination, of such causes as are not to be brought together by management or design. This noble plant may be cultivated ; but it must grow spontaneously.

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## CHAPTER XXXIII.

### *On Female Benevolence.*

NATURE is equally indulgent to every rank in life. As, in her vegetable kingdom, she has kindly made the sweetest of flowers the most common ; so, in the moral world, she has placed the lovely virtue which conduces most to human happiness, equally within the reach and cultivation of the rich and the poor.

Benevolence may be considered as the rose which is found as beautiful and as fragrant in the narrow border of the cottager, as in the ample and magnificent garden of the noble.

Charity is a theme on which the sublimest spirits have often and ably discoursed. Many

admirable things have been written on this lovely president of the angelic virtues.

That generous compassion, which interests the heart in the misfortune of others, is more particularly the portion of women. Every thing inclines them to generosity and piety.

Their delicate senses revolt at the presence of distress and pain. Objects of misery and aversion discompose the soft indolence of their minds. Their souls are more hurt by images of sorrow and of spleen, than tormented by their own sensibility; they must therefore be very anxious to afford relief. They possess, besides, in a high degree, that instinctive feeling, which operates without reasoning; and they often *relieve*, while men *deliberate*. Their benevolence is perhaps less rational, but it is more active; it is also more attentive, and more tender. What woman has ever been wanting in commiseration to the unfortunate?

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## CHAPTER XXXIV.

### *On Female Patriotism.*

WE shall now examine whether women, so susceptible of friendship, of pity, of benevolence to individuals, can elevate themselves to that patriotism, or disinterested love of one's country, which embraces all its citizens; and to that philanthropy, or universal love of mankind, which embraces all nations.

Patriotism surely ought not to be depreciated. It is the noblest sentiment of the human mind; at least it is that which has produced the greatest men, and which gave birth to those ancient heroes, whose history still astonishes our imagination, and accuses our weakness. Patriotism, no doubt, is most commonly produced by the ideas of interest and property, by the remembrance of past services, by the hope of future honours or rewards, and a certain enthusiasm which robs men of themselves; to transform their existence entirely into the body of the state.

These sentiments, it will readily be perceived, do not correspond with the condition of women. In almost all governments excluded from honours and from offices, possessed of little property, and restrained by the laws even in what they have, they cannot in general be supposed to be eminent for patriotism. Existing more in themselves, and in the objects of their sensibility, and perhaps less fitted than men by nature for the civil institutions in which they have less share, they must be less susceptible of that enthusiasm, which makes a man prefer the state to his family, and the collective body of his fellow citizens to himself.

The example of the Roman and Spartan ladies, and the wonders performed by the Dutch women in the revolution of the Seven Provinces, clearly prove that the glorious enthusiasm of liberty can do all things; that there are times when nature is astonished at

herself; and that great virtues spring from great calamities.

That universal love of mankind which extends to all nations and to all ages, and which is a kind of abstract sentiment, seems to correspond still less with the character of females than patriotism. They must have an *image* of what they love.

It is only by the power of arranging his ideas, that the philosopher is able to overleap so many barriers; to pass from a man to a people; from a people to human kind; from the time in which he lives, to ages yet unborn; and from what he sees, to what he does not see.

The tender sex do not love to send their souls so far a-wandering. They assemble their sentiments and their ideas about them, and confine their affections to what interests them most. Those strides of benevolence, to women, are out of nature. A man to them is more than a nation; and the hour in which they live, than a thousand ages after death.



## CHAPTER XXXV.

*Of Women with regard to Polished Life.*

THERE are certain qualities which have generally been ranked among the social virtues, but which may more properly be called *the virtues of polished life*. They are the charm and the bond of company; and are useful at all times, and upon all occasions.— They are, in the commerce of the world, what current money is in trade. They are sometimes not absolutely necessary, but one can never safely be without them. They always procure the possessor a more favourable reception.

Such is that mild complacency which gives a softness to the character, and an attractive sweetness to the manners; that indulgence which pardons the faults of others, even when it has no need of pardon itself; the art of being blind to the visible foibles of others, and of keeping the secret of those which are hidden; the art of concealing our advantages, when we humble our rivals or opponents, and of dealing gently with those who cannot submit without being offended. Such is that facility which adopts opinions it never had; that freedom which inspires confidence; and all that politeness, in short, which is so very pleasing, though sometimes no more than a happy lie.

*Politeness* is a part of the female character. It is connected with their minds, with their

manners, and even with their interest. To the most virtuous woman society is a field of conquest.

Few men have formed the project of making every body happy, and so much the worse for those who have. But many women have not only formed such a scheme, but have succeeded in it.

We are, in general, so much the more polite, as we are less devoted to ourselves, and more to others; as we are more attentive to opinion; as we are more zealous to be distinguished; and, perhaps, in proportion as we have fewer resources, and greater means of having them. In short, whether we speak of individuals or of nations, of the two sexes or the different ranks, when we say they are polite, we always suppose them to be idle, because we admit the necessity of their living together.

Hence the art of regulating our behaviour, of adjusting our looks, our words, and our motions, the need of attentions, and all the little gratifications of vanity.

We are naturally inclined to pay that homage which we receive, and to exact that which we pay. Thus the delicacy of self love produces all the refinements in society; as the delicacy of the senses produces all the refinements in pleasure; and as the delicacy of taste, which is perhaps only the result of the other two, produces all the refinements in literature, arts and sciences.

It will be easy to discern how these objects are connected with one another, and how they all relate to women.

But refined politeness, it may be said, is allied to falsehood. It substitutes the expression of sentiment too often for sentiment itself.

Flattery is common to both sexes. But the flattery of men is often very *disgusting*; that of women is more light, and has more the appearance of sentiment. Even when it is overdone, it is generally amusing. The motive and the manner save them from contempt.

Men generally owe their frankness to pride; women to address. The one sex often utters a truth, without any other view than truth itself. In the mouth of the other, even truth itself has an *aim*.

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## CHAPTER XXXVI.

### *On the Idea of Female Inferiority.*

IT is an opinion pretty generally established, that in strength of mind, as well as of body, men are greatly superior to women.—Let us, however, duly consider the several propensities and paths chalked out to each by the author of their nature.

Men are endowed with boldness and courage; women are not. The reason is plain: these are beauties in our character; in theirs they would be blemishes. Our genius often

leads to the great and the arduous; theirs to the soft and the pleasing; we bend our thoughts to make life convenient; they turn theirs to make it easy and agreeable. If the endowments allotted to us by nature could not be easily acquired by women, it would be as difficult for us to acquire those peculiarly allotted to them. Are we superior to them in what belongs to the male character? They are no less so to us, in what belongs to the female character.

Would it not appear rather ludicrous to say, that a man was endowed only with inferior abilities, because he was not expert in the nursing of children, and practising the various effeminacies which we reckon lovely in a woman? Would it be reasonable to condemn him on these accounts? Just as reasonable it is to reckon women inferior to men, because their talents are in general not adapted to tread the horrid path of war, nor to trace the mazes and intricacies of science.

The idea of the inferiority of female nature, has drawn after it several others the most absurd, unreasonable and humiliating to the sex. Such is the pride of man, that in some countries he has considered immortality as a distinction too glorious for women.—Thus degrading the fair partners of his nature, he places them on a level with the beasts that perish.

As the Asiatics have, time immemorial, considered women as little better than slaves, this opinion probably originated among them. The Mahometans, both in Asia and Europe,

are said, by a great variety of writers, to entertain this opinion.

Lady Montague, in her letters, has opposed this general assertion of the writers concerning the Mahometans; and says that they do not absolutely deny the existence of female souls, but only hold them to be of a nature inferior to those of men; and that they enter not into the same, but into an inferior paradise, prepared for them on purpose. Lady Montague, and the writers whom she has contradicted, may perhaps be both right.—The former might be the opinion which the Turks brought with them from Asia; and the latter, as a refinement upon it, they may have adopted by their intercourse with the Europeans.

This opinion, however, has had but a few votaries in Europe; though some have even here maintained it, and assigned various reasons for so doing. Among these, the following laughable reason is not the least particular—"In the Revelations of St. John the divine," said one, whose wife was a descendant of the famous Xantippe,\* "you will find this passage: *And there was silence in heaven for about the space of half an hour.* Now I appeal to any one, whether that could possibly have happened, had there been any women there? And, since there are none there, charity forbids us to imagine that they are all in a worse place; therefore it follows that they have no immortal part: and happy is it

\* Xantippe, was the wife of Socrates, and the most famous scold of antiquity.

for them, as they are thereby exempted from being accountable for all the noise and disturbance they have raised in this world."

In a very ancient treatise, called the Wisdom of all Times, ascribed to Hushang, one of the earliest kings of Persia, are the following remarkable words: "The passions of men may, by long acquaintance, be thoroughly known; but the passions of women are inscrutable: therefore they ought to be separated from men, lest the mutability of their tempers should infect others."

Ideas of a similar nature seem to have been, at this time generally diffused over the east. For we find Solomon, almost every where in his writings, exclaiming against women; and, in the Apocrypha, the author of Ecclesiasticus is still more illiberal in his reflections.

Both these authors, it is true, join in the most enraptured manner to praise a virtuous woman; but take care at the same time to let us know, that she is so great a rarity as to be very seldom met with.

Nor have the Asiatics alone been addicted to this illiberality of thinking concerning the sex. Satirists of all ages and countries, while they flattered them to their faces, have from their closets most profusely scattered their spleen and ill-nature against them. Of this the Greek and Roman poets afford a variety of instances; but they must nevertheless yield a palm to some of our moderns. In the following lines, Pope has outdone every one of them:

*"Men some to pleasure, some to business take;*

*"But every woman is at heart—a rake."*

Swift and Dr. Young have hardly been behind this celebrated splenetic in illiberality. They perhaps were not favourites of the fair, and in revenge vented all their envy and spleen against them. But a more modern and accomplished writer, who by his rank in life, by his natural and acquired *graces*, was undoubtedly a favourite, has repaid their kindness by taking every opportunity of exhibiting them in the most contemptible light. "Almost every man," says he, "may be gained some way; almost every woman any way." Can any thing exhibit a stronger caution to the sex? It is fraught with information; and it is to be hoped they will use it accordingly.

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## CHAPTER XXXVII.

### *On Female Simplicity.*

WOULD we conceive properly of that simplicity which is the sweetest expression of a well-informed and well-meaning mind, which every where diffuses tenderness and delicacy, sweetens the relations of life, and gives a zest to the minutest duties of humanity, let us contemplate every perceptible operation of nature, the twilight of the evening, the pearly dew-drops of the early morning, and all that various growth which indicates the genial return of spring. The same principle from which all that is soft and pleasing, amiable or exquisite to the eye or to the ear, in the exterior frame of nature, produces that

taste for true simplicity, which is one of the most useful, as well as the most elegant lessons, that *ladies* can learn.

Infancy, is perhaps, the finest and most perfect illustration of simplicity. It is a state of genuine nature throughout. The feelings of children are under no kind of restraint, but pure as the fire, free as the winds, honest and open as the face of heaven. Their joys incessantly flow in the thickest succession, and their griefs only seem fleeting and convalescent. To the calls of nature they are only attentive. They know no voice but hers. Their obedience to all her commands is prompt and implicit. They never anticipate her bounties, nor relinquish her pleasures. This situation renders them independent of artifice. Influenced only by nature, their manners, like the principle that produces them, are always the same.

Genuine simplicity is that peculiar quality of the mind, by which some happy characters are enabled to avoid the most distant approaches to every thing like affectation, inconsistency, or design, in their intercourse with the world. It is much more easily understood, however, than defined; and consists not in a specific tone of the voice, movement of the body, or mode imposed by custom, but is the natural and permanent effect of real modesty and good sense on the whole behavior.

This has been considered in all ages, as one of the first and most captivating ornaments of the sex. The savage, the Plebeian, the man of the world, and the courtier, are agreed



in stamping it with a preference to every other female excellence.

Nature only is lovely, and nothing unnatural can ever be amiable. The genuine expressions of truth and nature are happily calculated to impress the heart with pleasure. No woman, whatever her other qualities may be, was ever eminently agreeable, but in proportion as distinguished by these. The world is good-natured enough to give a lady credit for all the merit she can possess or acquire, without affectation. But the least shade or colouring of this odious foible brings certain and indelible obloquy on the most elegant accomplishments. The blackest suspicion inevitably rests on every thing assumed. She who is only an ape of others, or prefers formality, in all its gigantic and preposterous shapes, to that plain, unembarrassed conduct which nature unavoidably produces, will assuredly provoke an adundance of ridicule, but never can be an object either of love or esteem.

The various artifices of the sex discover themselves at a very early period. A passion for expence and show is one of the first they exhibit. This gives them a taste for refinement, which divests their young hearts of almost every other feeling, renders their tempers desultory and capricious, regulates their dress only by the most fantastic models of finery and fashion, and makes their company rather tiresome and awkward, than pleasing or elegant.

No one perhaps can form a more ludicrous contrast to every thing just and graceful in nature, than the woman whose sole object in

life is to pass for a *fine lady*. The attentions she every where and uniformly pays, expects, and even exacts, are tedious and fatiguing. Her various movements and attitudes are all adjusted and exhibited by rule. By a happy fluency of the most elegant language, she has the art of imparting a momentary dignity and grace to the merest trifles. Studious only to mimic such peculiarities as are most admired in others, she affects a loquacity peculiarly flippant and teasing; because scandal, routs, finery, fans, china, lovers, lap-dogs, or squirrels, are her constant themes. Her amusements, like those of a mag-pye, are only hopping over the same spots, prying into the same corners, and devouring the same species of prey. The simple and beautiful delineations of nature, in her countenance, gestures, and whole deportment are habitually deranged, distorted, or concealed, by the affected adoption of whatever grimace or deformity is latest, or most in vogue.

She accustoms her face to a simper, which every separate feature in it belies. She spoils, perhaps, a blooming complexion with a profusion of artificial coloring. She distorts the most exquisite shape by loads or volumes of useless drapery. She has her head, her arms, her feet, and her gait, equally touched by art and affectation, into what is called the *taste*, the *ton*, or the *fashion*.

She little considers to what a torrent of ridicule and sarcasm this mode of conduct exposes her; or how exceedingly cold and hollow that ceremony must be, which is not the

language of a warm heart. She does not reflect how insipid those smiles are, which indicate no internal pleasantries; nor how awkward those graces, which spring not from habits of good-nature and benevolence. Thus, pertness succeeds to delicacy, assurance to modesty, and all the vagaries of a listless, to all the sensibilities of an ingenuous mind.

With her, punctilio is politeness; dissipation, life; and levity, spirit. The miserable and contemptible drudge of every tawdry innovation in dress or ceremony, she incessantly mistakes extravagance for taste, and finery for elegance.

Her favorite examples are not those persons of acknowledged sincerity, who speak as they feel, and act as they think; but such only as are formed to dazzle her fancy, amuse her senses, or humor her whims. Her only study is how to glitter or shine, how to captivate and gratify the gaze of the multitude, or how to swell her own pomp and importance. To this interesting object all her assiduities and time are religiously devoted.

How often is debility of mind, and even badness of heart, concealed under a splendid exterior! The fairest of the species, and of the sex, often want sincerity; and without sincerity every other qualification is rather a blemish, than a virtue, or excellence. Sincerity operates in the moral, somewhat like the sun in the natural world; and produces nearly the same effects on the dispositions of the human heart, which he does on inanimate ob-

jects. Wherever sincerity prevails, and is felt, all the smiling and benevolent virtues flourish most ; disclose their sweetest lustre, and diffuse their richest fragrance.

Heaven has not a finer or more perfect emblem on earth, than a woman of genuine simplicity. She affects no graces which are not inspired by sincerity. Her opinions result not from passion and fancy, but from reason and experience. Candor and humility give expansion to her heart. She struggles for no kind of chimerical credit, disclaims the appearance of every affectation, and is in all things just what she seems, and others would be thought. Nature, not art, is the great standard of her manners ; and her exterior wears no varnish, or embellishment, which is not the genuine signature of an open, undesigning, and benevolent mind. It is not in her power, because not in her nature, to hide, with a fawning air, and a mellow voice, her aversion or contempt, where her delicacy is hurt, her temper ruffled, or her feelings insulted.

In short, whatever appears most amiable, lovely, or interesting in nature, art, manners, or life, originates in simplicity. What is correctness in taste, purity in morals, truth in science, grace in beauty, but simplicity ? It is the garb of innocence. It adorned the first ages, and still adorns the infant state of humanity. Without simplicity, woman is a vixen, a coquette, an hypocrite ; society, a masquerade, and pleasure, a phantom.

The following story, I believe, is pretty

generally known. A lady, whose husband had long been afflicted with an acute but lingering disease, suddenly feigned such an uncommon *tenderness* for him, as to resolve on dying in his stead. She had even the address to persuade him not to outlive this extraordinary instance of her conjugal fidelity and attachment. It was instantly agreed they should mutually swallow such a quantity of arsenic, as would speedily effect their dreadful purpose. She composed the fatal draught before his face, and even set him the desperate example of drinking first. By this device, which had all the appearance of the greatest affection and candour, the dregs only were reserved for him, and soon put a period to his life.

It then appeared that the dose was so tempered, as, from the weight of the principal ingredient, to be deadly only at the bottom, which she had artfully appropriated for his share. Even after all this finesse, she seized, we are told, his inheritance, and insulted his memory by a second marriage.

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## CHAPTER XXXVIII.

### *On the mild Magnanimity of Women.*

A LATE eminent anatomist, in a professional discourse on the female frame, is said to have declared, that it almost appeared an act of cruelty in nature to produce such a being as woman. This remark may, indeed, be the

natural exclamation of refined sensibility, in contemplating the various maladies to which a creature of such delicate organs is inevitably exposed; but, if we take a more enlarged survey of human existence, we shall be far from discovering any just reason to arraign the benevolence of its provident and gracious Author. If the delicacy of woman must render her familiar with pain and sickness, let us remember that her charms, her pleasures and her happiness arise also from the same attractive quality. She is a being, to use the forcible and elegant expression of a poet,

*"Fine by defect, and amiably weak."*

There is, perhaps, no charm by which she more effectually secures the tender admiration and the lasting love of the more hardy sex, than her superior endurance, her mild and *graceful* submission to the common evils of life.

Nor is this the sole advantage she derives from her gentle fortitude. It is the prerogative of this lovely virtue, to lighten the pressure of all those incorrigible evils which it cheerfully endures. The frame of man may be compared to the sturdy *oak*, which is often shattered by resisting the tempest. Woman is the pliant *osier*, which, in bending to the storm, eludes its violence.

The accurate observers of human nature will readily allow, that patience is most eminently the characteristic of woman. To what a sublime and astonishing height this virtue has been carried by beings of the most delicate texture, we have striking examples in the

many martyrs who were exposed, in the first ages of christianity, to the most barbarous and lingering torture.

Nor was it only from christian zeal that woman derived the power of defying the utmost rigours of persecution with invincible fortitude. Saint Ambrose, in his elaborate and pious treatise on this subject, records the resolution of a fair disciple of Pythagoras, who, being severely urged by a tyrant to reveal the secrets of her sex, to convince him that no torments should reduce her to so unworthy a breach of her vow, bit her own *tongue* asunder, and darted it in the face of her oppressor.

In consequence of those happy changes which have taken place in the world, from the progress of purified religion, the inflexible spirit of the tender sex is no longer exposed to such inhuman trials. But if the earth is happily delivered from the demons of torture and superstition; if beauty and innocence are no more in danger of being dragged to perish at the stake—perhaps there are situations, in female life, that require as much patience and magnanimity, as were formerly exerted in the fiery torments of the virgin martyr. It is more difficult to support an accumulation of *minute* infelicities, than any single calamity of the most terrific magnitude.

## CHAPTER XXXIX.

*On Female Delicacy.*

WHERE the human race has little other culture than what it receives from nature, the two sexes live together unconscious of almost any restraint on their words or on their actions. The Greeks, in the heroic ages, as appears from the whole history of their conduct, were totally unacquainted with delicacy. The Romans in the infancy of their empire, were the same. Tacitus informs us that the ancient Germans had not separate beds for the two sexes; but that they lay promiscuously on reeds or on hearth, spread along the walls of their houses. This custom still prevails in Lapland among the peasants of Norway, Poland and Russia; and it is not altogether obliterated in some parts of the highlands of Scotland and of Wales.

In Otaheite, to appear naked or in clothes, are circumstances equally indifferent to both sexes; nor does any word in their language, nor any action to which they are prompted by nature, seem more indelicate or reprehensible than another. Such are the effects of a total want of culture.

Effects not very dissimilar are, in France and Italy, produced from a redundancy of it. Though these are the politest countries in Europe, women there set themselves above shame, and despise delicacy. It is laughed



out of existence, as a silly and unfashionable weakness.

But in China, one of the politest countries in Asia, and perhaps not even, in this respect, behind France or Italy, the case is quite otherwise. No human being can be more delicate than a Chinese woman in her dress, in her behaviour, and in her conversation; and should she ever happen to be exposed in any unbecoming manner, she feels with the greatest poignancy the awkwardness of her situation, and if possible, covers her face, that she may not be known.

In the midst of so many discordant appearances, the mind is perplexed, and can hardly fix upon any cause to which female delicacy is to be ascribed. If we attend, however, to the whole animal creation, if we consider it attentively wherever it falls under our observation, it will discover to us, that in the female there is a greater degree of delicacy or coy reserve than in the male. Is not this a proof, that, though the wide extent of creation, the seeds of delicacy are more liberally bestowed upon females than upon males?

In the remotest periods of which we have any historical account, we find that the women had a delicacy to which the other sex were strangers. Rebecca veiled herself when she first approached Isaac her future husband.—Many of the fables of antiquity mark, with the most distinguishing characters, the force of female delicacy. Of this kind is the fable of Actæon and Diana. Actæon, a famous hunter, being in the woods with his hounds,

beating for game, accidentally spied Diana and her nymphs bathing in a river. Prompted by curiosity, he stole silently into a neighbouring thicket, that he might have a nearer view of them. The goddess discovering him, was so affronted at his audacity, and so much ashamed to have been seen naked, that in revenge she immediately transformed him into a stag, set his own hounds upon him, and encouraged them to overtake and devour him. Besides this, and other fables, and historical anecdotes of antiquity, their poets seldom exhibit a female character without adorning it with the graces of modesty and delicacy. Hence we may infer, that these qualities have not only been always essential to virtuous women in civilized countries, but were also constantly praised and esteemed by men of sensibility; and that delicacy is an innate principle in the female mind.

There are so many evils attending the loss of virtue in women, and so greatly are the minds of that sex depraved when they have deviated from the path of rectitude, that a general contamination of their morals may be considered as one of the greatest misfortunes that can befall a state, as in time it destroys almost every public virtue of the men. Hence all wise legislators have strictly enforced upon the sex a particular purity of manners; and not satisfied that they should abstain from vice only, have required them even to shun every appearance of it.

Such, in some periods, were the laws of the Romans; and such were the effects of

these laws, that if ever female delicacy shone forth in a conspicuous manner, it was perhaps among those people, after they had worn off much of the barbarity of their first ages, and before they became contaminated by the wealth and manners of the nations which they plundered and subjected. Then it was that we find many of their women surpassing in modesty almost every thing related by fable; and then it was that their ideas of delicacy were so highly refined, that they could not even bear the secret consciousness of an involuntary crime, and far less of having tacitly consented to it.

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## CHAPTER XL.

### *On Female Wit.*

WIT has been well compared to the dancing of a meteor, that blazes, allures and misleads. Most certainly it alone can never be a steady light; and too probably it is often a fatal one. Of those who have resigned themselves to its guidance, how few has it not betrayed into great indiscretions at least, by inflaming their thirst of applause; by rendering them little nice in their choice of company; by seducing them into strokes of satire, too offensive to the persons against whom they were levelled, not to be repelled upon the authors with full vengeance; and, finally, by making them, in consequence of that heat which produces, and that vanity

which fosters it, forgetful of those cool and moderate rules that ought to regulate their conduct!

A very few only have been endowed with judgment and temper sufficient to restrain them from indulging "the rash dexterity of wit," and to direct it to purposes equally agreeable and beneficial. But one thing is certain—that witty men, for the most part, have had few friends, though many admirers. Their conversation has been courted, while their abilities have been feared, or their characters hated—or both. In truth, the last have seldom merited affection, even when the first have excited esteem. Sometimes their hearts have been so bad, as at length to bring their heads into disgrace.

At any rate, the faculty termed *wit* is commonly looked on with a suspicious eye, as a two-edged sword, from which not even the sacredness of friendship can secure.

It is generally more dreaded in *women* than in men. In a Mrs. Rowe, we may presume, it was not. To great brilliancy of imagination, that angelic female joined yet greater goodness of disposition; and never wrote, nor was ever supposed to have said, in her whole life, an ill-natured, or even an indelicate thing. Of such a woman, with all her talents, none could be afraid. In her company, it must have been impossible not to feel respect. If ought on earth can present the image of celestial excellence in its softest array, it is surely an *accomplished woman*; in

whom purity and meekness, intelligence and modesty, mingle their charms.

Men of the best sense, however, have been usually averse to the thought of marrying a *witty* female. Were they afraid of being outshone? Some of them perhaps might be so, but many of them acted on different motives. Men who understand the science of domestic happiness, know that its very first principle is ease. Of that indeed we grow fonder, in every condition, as we advance in life, and as the heat of youth abates. But we cannot be easy where we are not safe.—We are never safe in the company of a *critic*; and almost every wit is a critic by profession. In such company we are not at liberty to unbend ourselves. All must be the straining of study, or the anxiety of apprehension. How painful! Where the heart may not expand and open itself with freedom, farewell to real friendship, farewell to convivial delight! But to suffer this restraint at home, what misery! From the brandishings of wit in the hand of ill-nature, of imperious passion, or of unbounded vanity, who would not flee? But when that weapon is brandished at a husband, is it to be wondered if, from his own house, he takes shelter in the tavern! He sought a friend, he expected to be happy in a reasonable companion: he has found a perpetual satirist, or a self-sufficient prattler. How does one pity such a man, when one sees him in continual fear on his own account, and that of his friends, and for the poor lady herself; lest, in the run of her discourse, she should

be guilty of some petulance or some indiscretion, that would expose her, and hurt them all.

But take the matter at the best, there is still all the difference in the world between the entertainer of an evening, and a partner for life. Of the latter, a sober mind, steady attachment, and gentle manners, joined to a good understanding, will ever be the chief recommendation; whereas the qualities that sparkle will be often sufficient for the former.

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## CHAPTER XLI.

### *On the Influence of Female Society.*

THE company of ladies has a very powerful influence on the sentiments and conduct of men. Woman the fruitful source of half our joys, and perhaps of *more* than half our sorrows, give an elegance to our manners, and a relish to our pleasures. They sooth our afflictions, and soften our cries. Too much of their company will render us effeminate, and infallibly stamp upon us many signatures of the female nature. A rough and unpolished behaviour, as well as slovenliness of person, will certainly be the consequence of an almost constant exclusion from it. By spending a reasonable portion of our time in the company of women, and another in the company of our own sex, we shall imbibe a proper share of the softness of the female, and

at the same time retain the firmness and constancy of the male.

"We believe that is it proper," says an amiable writer, who has studied the human heart with success, "for persons of the same age, of the same sex, of similar dispositions and pursuits, to associate together." But here we seem to be deceived by words. If we consult nature and common sense, we shall find, that the true propriety and *harmony* of social life depend upon the connection of people of *different* dispositions and characters judiciously blended together. Nature hath made no individual, and no class of people, independent of the rest of their species, or sufficient for their own happiness.

"Each sex, each character, each period of life, have their several advantages and disadvantages ; and that union is the happiest and most proper where wants are mutually supplied.

"The fair sex should naturally hope to gain from our conversation knowledge, wisdom, and sedateness ; and they should give to us, in exchange, humanity, politeness, cheerfulness, taste, and sentiment.

"The levity, the rashness, and folly of early life are tempered with the gravity, the caution, and the wisdom of age ; while the timidity, coldness of heart, and languor incident to declining years, are supported and assisted by the courage, the warmth, and the vivacity of youth."

As little social intercourse subsisted between the two sexes, in the more early ages

of antiquity, we find the men less courteous, and the women less engaging. Vivacity and cheerfulness seem hardly to have existed. Even the Babylonians, who appear to have allowed their women more liberty than any of the ancients, seem not to have lived with them in a friendly and familiar manner. But as their intercourse with them was considerably greater than that of the neighbouring nations, they acquired thereby a polish and refinement unknown to any of the people who surrounded them. The manners of both sexes were softer, and better calculated to please.

They likewise paid more attention to cleanliness and dress.

After the Greeks became famous for their knowledge of the arts and sciences, their rudeness and barbarity were only softened a *few degrees*. It is not therefore arts, sciences, and *learning*, but the company of the other sex, that forms the manners and renders the man *agreeable*.

The Romans were, for some time, a community without women, and consequently without any thing to soften the ferocity of male nature. The Sabine virgins, whom they had stolen, appear to have infused into them the first ideas of politeness. But it was many ages before this politeness banished the roughness of the warrior, and assumed the refinement of the gentleman.

During the times of chivalry, female influence was at the zenith of its glory and perfection. It was the source of valour, it gave birth to politeness, it awakened pity, it called forth be-



nevolence, it restricted the hand of oppression, and meliorated the human heart. "I cannot approach my mistress," said one, "till I have done some glorious deed that may deserve her notice. Actions should be the messengers of the heart; they are the homage due to beauty, and they only should discover love."

Marsan, instructing a young knight how to behave so as to gain the favour of the fair, has these remarkable words:—"When your arm is raised, if your lance fail, draw your sword directly; and let heaven and hell resound with the clash. Lifeless is the soul which beauty cannot animate, and weak is the arm which cannot fight valiantly to defend it."

The Russians, Poles, and even the Dutch, pay less attention to their females than any of their neighbours, and are, by consequence, less distinguished for the graces of their persons, and the feelings of their hearts.

The lightness of their food, and the salubrity of their air, have been assigned as reasons for the vivacity and cheerfulness of the French, and their fortitude in supporting their spirits through all the adverse circumstances of this world. But the constant mixture of the young and old, of the two sexes, is no doubt one of the *principal* reasons why the cares and ills of life sit lighter on the shoulders of that fantastic people, than on those of any other country in the world.

The French reckon an excursion dull, and a party of pleasure without relish, unless a mixture of both sexes join to compose it. The French women do not even withdraw

from the table after meals ; nor do the men discover that impatience to have them dismissed, which they so often do in England.

It is alledged by those who have no relish for the conversation of the fair sex, that their presence curbs the freedom of speech, and restrains the jollity of mirth. But, if the conversation and the mirth are decent, if the company are capable of relishing any thing but wine, the very reverse is the case. Ladies, in general, are not only more cheerful than gentlemen, but more eager to promote mirth and good humour.

So powerful, indeed, are the company and conversation of the fair, in diffusing happiness and hilarity, that even the cloud which hangs on the *thoughtful brow* of an Englishman, begins in the present age to brighten, by his devoting to the ladies a larger share of time than was formerly done by his ancestors.

Though the influence of the sexes be reciprocal, yet that of the ladies is certainly the greatest. How often may one see a company of men, who were disposed to be riotous, checked all at once into decency by the accidental entrance of an amiable woman ; while her good sense and obliging deportment charms them into at least a temporary conviction, that there is nothing so beautiful as female excellence, nothing so delightful as female conversation, in its best form ! Were such conviction frequently repeated, what might we not expect from it at last ?

“ Were Virtue,” said an ancient philosopher, “ to appear amongst men in visible

shape, what vehement desires would she enkindle !” Virtue exhibited without affectation, by a lovely young person, of improved understanding and gentle manners, may be said to appear with the most alluring aspect, surrounded by the *Graces*.

It would be an easy matter to point out instances of the most evident reformation, wrought on particular men, by their having happily conceived a passion for virtuous women.

To form the manners of men, various causes contribute ; but nothing, perhaps, so much as the turn of the woman with whom they converse. Those who are most conversant with women of virtue and understanding, will be always found the most amiable characters ; other circumstances being supposed alike. Such society, beyond every thing else, rubs off the *corners* that gave many of our sex an ungracious roughness. It produces a polish more perfect, and more pleasing than that which is received from a general commerce with the world. This last is often specious, but commonly superficial. The other is the result of gentler feelings, and more humanity. The heart itself is moulded. Habits of undissembled courtesy are formed. A certain flowing urbanity is acquired. Violent passions, rash oaths, coarse jests, indelicate language of every kind, are precluded and disrelished.

Understanding and virtue, by being often contemplated in the most engaging lights, have a sort of assimilating power. Let it not

be supposed, however, that the men, here described, will become feminine. Their sentiments and deportment will only contract a grace; their principles will have nothing ferocious or forbidding; their affections will be chaste and soothing at the same instant. In that case, the *gentleman*, the man of *worth*, and the *religious* man, will all melt insensibly and sweetly into one another.

The French and Italian nobility are generally educated in the drawing-room, at the toilette, and places of public amusement, where they are constantly in the company of women.

The English nobility and gentry receive their education at the University, and at New-market, where books, grooms, and jockies must, of course, be their companions.

Some mode of education, between these two extremes, would have a tendency to preserve the dignity of the man, as well as to infuse a sufficient quantity of the address of the woman.

Female society gives men a taste for cleanliness and elegance of person. Our ancestors, who kept but little company with their women, were not only slovenly in their dress, but had their countenances disfigured with long beards. By female influence, however, beards were, in process of time, mutilated down to mustaches. As the gentlemen found that the ladies had no great relish for mustaches, which were the relicts of a beard, they cut and curled them into various fashions, to render them more agreeable. At last, however, finding

such labor vain, they gave them up altogether. But as those of the three learned professions were supposed to be endowed with, or at least to stand in need of, more wisdom than other people, and as the longest beard had always been deemed to sprout from the wisest chin, to supply this mark of distinction, which they had lost they contrived to smother their heads in enormous quantities of frizzled hair, that they might bear the greater resemblance to an owl, the bird sacred to wisdom and Minerva.

To female society it has been objected by the learned and studious, that it enervates the mind, and gives it such a turn for trifling, levity, and dissipation, as renders it altogether unfit for that application which is necessary in order to become eminent in any of the sciences. In proof of this they allege, that the greatest philosophers seldom or never were men who enjoyed, or were fit for, the company or conversation of women. Sir Issac Newton hardly ever conversed with any of the sex. Bacon, Boyle, des Cartes, and many others, conspicuous for their learning and application, were but indifferent companions to the fair.

It is certain, indeed, that the youth who devotes his whole time and attention to female conversation, and the little offices of gallantry, never distinguishes himself in the literary world. But notwithstanding this, without the fatigue and application of severe study, he often obtains, by female interest, that which is denied to the merited improvements acquired by the labor of many years.

## CHAPTER XLII.

*Of the British Ladies at different Periods.*

WHAT polished nations understand by society, appears to have been little known in England, before the reign of Henry VIII. This backwardness may in some measure be ascribed to our continental wars with France and with Scotland. By our quarrels with the one, we were shut out from foreign intercourse ; and by our hostilities with both, we were diverted from cultivating the arts of peace.

The spirit of chivalry, which produced such amazing effects on the Continent, was more weakly felt here. Edward III. had indeed established the order of the Garter.— But real wars allowed the knights little time for the mock encounter, or the generous visions of romantic heroism. *Love* was still a simple passion, which led the shortest way to its gratification, and generally in conformity with law and custom. It partook little of imagination ; and consequently, required few perfections in its object. It aspired neither at angels nor goddesses.

The women, who still retained all their native innocence and modesty, were regarded only as wives and mothers. Where qualifications are not *demandèd*, they will never be found. The accomplishments of the sex entitled them to no other character ; and it had perhaps been happy for both sexes, if they

could have remained in such a state of simplicity.

The Scots by means of their alliance with France, which had subsisted for several centuries, and that spirit of adventure, which has at all times led them abroad in quest of reputation, civil or military, may be supposed at this time to have been better acquainted with the elegancies of life, than their wealthy and powerful neighbors. Accordingly we find, in the court of James IV. a taste in music, in letters, and in *gallantry*, to which the great monarch of the house of Tudor and his haughty barons were yet strangers.

But the political state of both kingdoms was an insuperable bar to all liberal intercourse. The barons, or chiefs, were hostile to the court, from which they had every thing to fear, and nothing to hope. They were dreaded by it in their turn; they looked from the walls of their castles with a jealous eye on each other; they never went abroad, but attended by a numerous train of domestics. They visited each other with the state, and the diffidence of neighbouring princes. Their *marriages* were contracted from family motives, and their courtships were conducted with the greatest *form*, and the most distant respect. They took liberties indeed with the women of inferior condition, and they rioted in thoughtless jollity with their dependants. But the ideas of inferiority and dependance are incompatible with those of society and gallantry.

Henry VII. by curbing the hostile spirit of the barons, by abridging their power, by diminishing their retainers, by extending commerce, by encouraging agriculture, by securing peace to his subjects, at home and abroad, prepared the way for learning, arts and elegance. But the taste of the nation was not yet ripe for their reception; and the temper of his son, Henry VIII. was not highly favourable to such a revolution. That prince, however, by his taste for tournaments, fostered the spirit of chivalry. By his magnificence and profusion he drew the nobility to court; and, by his interviews with the emperor and the French king, he roused their emulation of foreign elegance. They were smitten with the love of letters and of gallantry. The Earl of Surrey, in particular, celebrated his *mistress* in his verses, and defended her honour with his sword, against all who dared, with unhallowed lips, to profane her *immaculate* name.

The women in this reign likewise began to discover a taste for literature and politeness. The countess of Richmond, mother to Henry VII. and who survived him, had shewn the way. She translated two pious treatises from the French; and was a great patroness of learning. Elizabeth Blount, mistress to Henry VIII. was a woman of elegant accomplishments; and his last queen, Catharine Parr, wrote with facility both in Latin and English, and appears besides to have been a woman of address.



But the house of Sir Thomas More seems, in a more particular manner, to have been the habitation of the Muses, and even of the Graces. He was possessed of all the learning of antiquity, and was pious even to weakness. But neither his religion nor his learning, soured his temper, nor blunted his taste for society. His ideas of the female character would do honour to a gentleman of the present age. "May you meet with a wife not stupidly silent, nor always prattling nonsense. May she be learned, if possible, or at least capable of being made so. A woman, thus accomplished, will always be drawing sentiments and maxims out of the best authors. She will be *herself*, in all the changes of fortune. She will neither be blown up with prosperity, nor broken in adversity.— You will find in her an even, cheerful, good-humored friend, and an agreeable companion for life. She will infuse knowledge into your children with their *milk*, and from their infancy train them up to wisdom. Whatever company you are engaged in, you will *long* to be at home; and will retire with delight from the society of men into the *bosom* of a woman, who is so dear, so knowing and so amiable. If she touches her lute, and more particularly if she sings to it any of her own compositions, it will soothe your solitude, and her voice will sound sweeter in your ear than the song of the nightingale. You will spend whole days and nights with pleasure in her company, and you will be always finding out new beauties in her mind. She will keep

your soul in perpetual serenity. She will restrain its mirth from being dissolute, and prevent its melancholy from becoming painful."

According to these ideas, he educated his three daughters, whose virtues and talents appear to have merited all his care. They lived for some time in one house, with their father, their husbands and their children, and formed a society, all things considered, which has seldom, if ever, been equalled, in any age or country; where morals were sublimed by religion; where manners were polished by a sense of elegance, and softened by a desire to please; where friendship was warmed by love, and strengthened by the ties of blood. Their conversation animated by genius, enriched by learning, and moderated by respect, exulting in the dignity of its object, seemed to approach to that fine transport which immortal beings may be supposed to feel, in pouring out their contemplations of the wisdom and goodness of the Creator. When lighter matters were the subject of discourse, wit had a spring, humor a flow, and sentiment a poignancy, of which those who are often talking of trifles, who hover continually on the surface of the earth, and rove like butterflies from sense to sense, both in their lives and conversations, can have no conception.

The reign of Elizabeth is justly considered as one of the most shining periods in the English history. For purity of manners, vigor of mind, vigor of character, and personal address, it is, perhaps unequalled.

The magnificent entertainments which that illustrious princess so frequently gave her court, and at which she generally appeared in person, with a most engaging familiarity, rubbed off the ancient reserve of the nobility, and increased the taste of society, and even of gallantry. The masculine boldness of her character, however, was unfavourable to female graces. The women of her court, like herself, were rather objects of respect than love. Their virtues were severe; their learning and their talents were often great; they had passions, but they knew how to suppress them, or to divert them into the channel of interest or ambition. They did not, however, want their admirers. Men were less delicate in those days.

Spencer, by writing his "Fairy Queen," revived in Britain the spirit of chivalry at a time when it began to expire on the continent; and Sir Philip Sydney, in his "Arcadia," refined on that sentiment. The Fairy Queen was intended as a compliment to Elizabeth; and the Arcadia was dedicated by Sir Philip to his sister, the countess of Pembroke, the most amiable and accomplished woman of her time.

The following ingenious and well-known verses were intended as part of her epitaph:

"Underneath this sable hearse  
Lies the subject of all verse,  
Sydney's sister, Pembroke's mother—  
Death! ere thou hast kill'd another,  
Fair, and learn'd, and good as she,  
Time shall throw a dart at thee."

Elizabeth herself was a great and singular character. But she had few qualities to recommend her as a woman, though passionately fond of personal admiration. Nor were her talents, as a writer, either striking or elegant, though she appears to have been ambitious of literary fame. Her ability as a sovereign has been already considered. Her virtues were those of her rank, and of her age; and her weaknesses those of her sex. They failed, however, to render her amiable.

The accession of James VI. to the throne of England, contributed still farther to obstruct the progress of civilization in Scotland, and to the decline of the arts in that country. The removal of the court drew the nobility to London, to spend their fortunes, or obtain preferment. Men of genius and learning likewise looked this way.

That event, however, must have contributed to the advancement of society in England; yet not so much as might be expected. The scantiness of James's revenue, together with his want of economy, rendered him unable to support the splendour of a court. It was besides inconsistent with his maxims of policy, and with his temper. He loved to be social with his friends, but hated a croud; and had rather an aversion to the company of women. A mean jealousy, which took place of a generous emulation, between the Scotch and English courtiers, prevented still farther, the refinement of manners; which can only be effected by a liberal intercourse.

The nobility and gentry of England are still fonder of a country life than those of any polished nation in Europe. It prevailed much more then, and was highly encouraged by James. He even issued proclamations, containing severe threatenings, against the gentry who lived in town. By these means, the ancient pride of family was preserved. Men of birth were distinguished by a stateliness of carriage. Much ceremony took place in the ordinary commerce of life; and, as riches acquired by trade were still rare, little familiarity was indulged by the great.

The most distinguished women of this period in Britain, were the Duchess of Newcastle, Lady Pakington and Lady Halket.

The Duchess of Newcastle has left us a variety of compositions, both in prose and verse, of no mean character.

Lady Pakington has long been reputed the author of *The whole duty of Man*, and several other moral and divine treatises; which are written with so much temper, purity, piety, philosophy and good sense, that she may be justly reckoned the glory of her sex, and an honour to human nature. What greatness of mind and goodness of heart must the person be possessed of, who could deny herself the honour of such works, lest the name of a woman should render them of less service to mankind!

The restoration of monarchy made ample amends to beauty for the indignities of the commonwealth. The reign of Charles II. may be considered, in one light as the most

glorious æra to women in the history of Britain, and as the most debasing in another.— They were never so much caressed; never so little respected.

Charles himself had a susceptible, but changeable heart; a social temper, a genteel manner, and a lively wit. His courtiers partook much of the character of their master. They had all suffered the pressure of adversity, or felt the insolence of tyranny. They began to think that Christianity was a fable; that virtue was a cheat; that friendship and generosity were but words of course; and, in greedily enjoying their change of fortune, they sunk themselves beneath the dignity of men. In avoiding spiritual pride, and in retaliating selfishness, they departed from the essential principles of religion and morals; and by contrasting the language and the manners of hypocrisy, they shamelessly violated the laws of decency and decorum.

Overjoyed at the return of their sovereign, the whole royal party dissolved in thoughtless jollity; and even many of the republicans, particularly the younger class, and the women, were glad to be relieved from the austerity of the commonwealth. A general relaxation of manners took place. Pleasure became the universal object, and love the prevailing taste; but that love was rather an appetite than a passion. Beauty, unconnected with virtue, was its object: it was therefore void of honor and attachment. In consequence of such manners, female virtue, robbed of its reward, became rather a mode of

behavior to inflame desire, or procure elevation, than a sentiment or principle ; and, of course, sooner or later, was either sacrificed to inclination or to caprice.

But these observations in their full extent, must only be understood of the court. The greater part of the gentry still resided on their estates in the country, equally strangers to the pleasures of the court and town ; and one half of the island was filled with indignation at the vices of Whitehall. The stage, which generally takes its complexion from the court, was a continued scene of sensuality, blasphemy, and absurdity.

The free intercourse, however, of all ranks of men, from the king to the commoner, improved the talent of society, and polished the language of conversation. Gallantry, licentious as it was, produced an habit of politeness ; and from the irregular, and even impious freedom of writing and thinking, sprung many strokes of real genius, and a liberal spirit of inquiry, whose researches and experiments have benefited mankind, and carried philosophy and the sciences to an height that does honor to modern times:

The women of this reign, as may be expected from the taste of the men, were more solicitous about adorning their persons, than their minds. But the frequent intercourse between the sexes in some measure compensated that neglect. By such a commerce they became more easy, more free, more lively, and more capable of conversation than the women of any preceding age. They had less

learning, but more accomplishments ; and perhaps more genius. They wanted nothing but virtue to have made their memories immortal ; and, notwithstanding the general depravity, there were some who trod the narrow path, whose taste and sentiments were uncorrupted, and whose names still live in their writings, and in the verses of their contemporaries.

The reign of James II. was too short to have any distinct character. It is only singular for the blind bigotry, and blinder disposition of the prince which roused the minds of men from the delirium of pleasure in which they had been lost, and brought about the revolution.

Under William III. the effects of that change were visible on the manners. The nation returned to what may be called its natural state. An attention to just politics, to sound philosophy and true religion, characterize the æra of British liberty.

William himself was of a gloomy temper, and had a dislike to the company of women. The intercourse of the sexes, and those amusements which are its consequences, were therefore little countenanced during his reign. By these means the ladies had more time for the pursuits of learning and knowledge ; and they made use of it accordingly. Many of them became adepts in the sciences. Lady Masham, and Mary Astell, particularly, discussed with judgment and ability the most abstract points in metaphysics and divinity.

These two ladies differed on a very deli-



cate point. Mary affirmed that we ought to love with *desire* God only, every other love being sinful. Lady Masham opposed that doctrine as a dangerous refinement. Each had her abettors. Miss Astell was supported by Mr. Norris, and Lady Masham by Mr. Locke. They were both great advocates for the learning of women ; and their arguments and example appear to have roused many of the sex to a more serious attention to religion and morality.

The reign of queen Anne may be said to have been the summer, of which William's was only the spring. Every thing was ripened ; nothing was corrupted. It was a short, but glorious period of heroism and national capacity, of taste and science, learning and genius, of gallantry without licentiousness, and politeness without effeminacy.

One is in doubt which most to admire in the women of this reign, the manners, the talents, or the accomplishments. They were religious without severity, and without enthusiasm. They were learned without pedantry. They were intelligent and attractive, without neglecting the duties of their sex. They were elegant and entertaining, without levity. In a word, they joined the graces of society to the knowledge of letters, and the virtues of domestic life. They were friends and companions, without ceasing to be wives and mothers.

In support of the foregoing character of the British ladies under the reign of queen Anne, we need only add the names of Lady

Chudleigh, Lady Winchelsea, the honorable Mrs. Monk, Mrs. Bovey, and Stella.

Of these ladies, Mrs. Bovey is perhaps the least known, as she has left no writings, and had no poetical lover to spread her name. She is, however, very handsomely complimented by Sir Richard Steele, in the dedication of the second volume of the "Ladies Library;" and Mrs. Manley gives the following elegant character of her in "The new Atalantis:" "Her person has as many charms as can be desired. Her air, her manner, her judgment, her wit, her conversation, are admirable. Her sense is solid and perspicuous. She is so perfect an economist, that in taking in all the greater duties of life she does not disdain to stoop to the most inferior. In short, she knows all that a man can know, without despising what, as a woman, she ought not to be ignorant of."

Under George I. the manners of the nation were sensibly changed; but not so much as the national spirit. The South Sea scheme, and other mercenary projects, produced a passion of avarice, and a taste of luxury, which prepared the way for all the corruptions of the following reign.

The delirium of riches was beyond what the most extravagant imagination can conceive. Any scheme, however absurd, met with encouragement, if it only proposed sufficient advantages. All ranks and conditions, and even *women* resorted to 'Change Alley, with the looks of harpies ready to seize upon their prey; but in reality the victims of their

own credulity and sordid passions. The peers of the realm became stock-jobbers, and its ministers brokers. Public virtue was lost in the visions of private benefit. Letters fell into contempt, though supported by the greatest examples of successful genius. Love grew covetous, and beauty venal.

There were, however, in this reign many woman of liberal and elegant talents; among the first of whom may be ranked Lady Mary W. Montague, so well known for her spirited poems, and ingenious letters.

As the manners of the two sexes generally keep pace with each other, in proportion as the men grew regardless of character, the women neglected the duties of their sex. Tho' little inclined to hoarding, they are not perhaps less disposed to avarice than men. Gold to them is desirable, as the minister of vanity, voluptuousness and show. It became their supreme object, and the only source of the matrimonial union, to the exclusion of that tender sentiment, which alone can give strength to the sacred tie, or pleasure to the nuptial state. The young, the beautiful, the healthful, were wedded, though not always with their own consent, to age, deformity and disease. Virtue was joined to profligacy, and wantonness to severity.

Such marriages were necessarily destructive of domestic felicity. The want of cordiality at home, naturally leads us abroad; as the want of happiness in ourselves leads us to seek it in externals, and to torture imagination for the gratification of appetites, which,

undepraved, are simple and uniform. New amusements and societies of pleasure were every day formed ; new modes of dissipation were invented ; the order of nature was changed ; night and day were inverted ; fancy and language were exhausted for names to the assemblies of politeness and gallantry.

Nothing is so oppressive as time to the unhappy, or thought to the vacant mind. These were not all enough. They seemed afraid of themselves, and of each other. The husband had one set of visitors ; the wife another. He prosecuted his pleasures abroad : she entertained her friends at home ; or resorted to some public amusement, or private pleasure.

A spirit of gaming which mingled itself with dissipation and pleasure, afforded a pretence for nocturnal meetings. And gaming, it must be acknowledged, discovers the temper, ruffles the passions, corrupts the heart, and breaks down the strongest barrier of virtue—a decent reserve between the sexes.

At present, we presume that notwithstanding the relaxation of manners, the aversion to whatever is serious, the thirst of admiration, and the neglect of those qualities which produce esteem, so conspicuous in some ; yet the generality of our fair countrywomen possess the domestic virtues in a considerable degree of perfection. Infidelity is not so common as some libertines would endeavor to persuade us ; and elopements are stronger proofs of sensibility than the want of shame.

In this island, and even in the metropolis, there are many women who would have done

honour to any age or country ; who join a refined taste and a cultivated understanding to a feeling heart, and who adorn their talents and their sensibility with sentiments of virtue, honor, and humanity. We have women who could have reasoned with Locke, who might have disputed the laurel with Pope, and to whom Addison would have listened with pleasure.

Even in the middle of opulence, and of that luxury which too often mingles avarice with state, which narrows the heart, and makes it at the same time vain and cruel, we see women who yearly set apart a portion of their substance for the poor ; who make it their business to find out the bodies of misery, and who number among their pleasures the relief of the orphan, and the tears shed in the consolation of the widow.

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## CHAPTER XLIII.

### *On the Privileges of British Women.*

THOUGH the French and Italians are superior to the inhabitants of Great Britain in politeness and in elegance, yet the condition of their women, upon the whole, is not preferable. Such privileges and immunities as they derive from the influence of politeness, the British derive from the laws of their country.

In France, the Salique law does not allow a female to inherit the crown. But in En-

gland, a woman may be the first personage in the kingdom, may succeed to the crown in her own right, and in that case, not bound by any of the laws which restrain woman, she may enjoy the same powers and privileges as a king. Such a queen, if she marry, retains also the same power, issues the orders, and transacts the business of the state in her own name, and continues still the sovereign, while her husband is only a subject.

When a king succeeds in his own right to the crown, and marries, his queen is then only a subject, and her rights and privileges are not near so extensive. She is exempted, however, from the general laws, which exclude married women from having any property in their own right. She may sue any person at law, without joining her husband in the suit ; she may purchase lands ; she may sell and convey them to another person, without the interference of her husband ; she may have a separate property in goods and in lands, and may dispose of these by will, as if she were a single woman. On the commission of any crime, however, she may be tried and punished by the peers of the realm.

To violate the chastity of the queen, of the consort of the Prince of Wales, or of the eldest daughter of the king, although with their own consent, is high treason and punishable accordingly. The younger *daughters*, as well as sons of the king, are hardly otherwise distinguished by the laws, than by having the precedence of all other subjects in public ceremonies.

A peeress when guilty of any crime, cannot be tried but by the house of peers.

A woman who is noble in her own right, cannot lose her nobility by marrying the meanest plebian. She communicates her nobility to her children, but not to her husband.

She who is only ennobled by marrying a peer, loses that nobility, if she afterwards marry a commoner.

She who first marries a duke or other peer of a superior order, and afterwards a simple baron, is still allowed to retain her first title, and the privileges annexed to it; for the law considers all peers as equals.

By the courtesy of this country, the wives of baronets are called ladies, a title superior to that of their husbands, but at the same time a title to which they have no legal right, being in all judicial writs and proceedings only denominated Dame such-a-one, according to the names of their husbands.

The law of England ordains, that if a man courts a woman, promises to marry her, and afterwards marries another, she may, by bringing an action against him, recover such damages as a jury shall think adequate to the loss she has sustained. In Scotland, she may receive one half of the fortune he receives with his wife. On the other hand, as it sometimes happens that artful women draw on the more fond and silly part of our sex to make them valuable presents under pretence of marriage, and afterwards laugh at or refuse to marry them—a man, who has been so bubbled, may sue the woman to return the presents he made

her, because they were presumed to have been conditionally given, and she has failed in performing her part of the condition.

Wives cannot be imprisoned for debt, nor deprived of their personal liberty for any thing but crimes ; and even such of these as subject the offender only to a pecuniary punishment must be expiated by the husband.

No married woman is liable to pay any debt, even though contracted without the knowledge, or against the consent of her husband. And what is still more extraordinary, whatever debts she may have contracted while single, devolve, the moment of her marriage, upon the hapless spouse, who, like the scape-goat, is loaded by the priest who performs the ceremony with all the sins and extravagances of his wife.

It is a common opinion among the vulgar, that a general warning in the Gazette, or in a news-paper, will exempt a man from the payment of such debts as are contracted by his wife without his knowledge. But this opinion is without any good foundation. Particular warnings, however, given in writing, have been held as good exemptions. But such are of little advantage to a husband, as his wife may always find people to give her credit, whom the husband has not cautioned against it.

When a husband forces his wife to leave him by cruel usage, she may claim a separate maintenance ; while she enjoys this, he is not liable to pay any of her debts.

If a husband, conscious of having used his



wife ill, will not allow her to go out of his house, or carries her away, or keeps her concealed, in order to prevent her endeavoring to find redress of the evils that she suffers, her friends may, in that case, by applying to the court of King's Bench, obtain an order for the husband to produce his wife before the said court : and if she there swears the peace against him, she delivers herself from his jurisdiction, and he cannot compel her to live with him, but the court will grant her an order to live where she pleases.

Among the Romans, among several other ancient nations, and among some people in the present times, it is not deemed culpable for a husband to kill the man whom he surprises committing adultery with his wife. By the laws of England, he who kills such a man is reckoned guilty of manslaughter ; but, in consequence of the great provocation given, the court commonly orders the sentence of burning on the hand to be inflicted in the slightest manner.

A husband is not allowed to leave his wife, she may enter a suit against him for the restitution of the rights of marriage ; and the spiritual court will compel him to return, to live with her, and to restore them.

A husband cannot devise by his will such of his wife's ornaments and jewels as she is accustomed to wear ; though it has been held that he may, if he pleases, dispose of them in his life time.

A husband is liable to answer all such actions at law as were attached against his wife

at the time of their marriage, and also to pay all the debts she had contracted previous to that period. But if his wife shall happen to die before he has made payment of such debts, the compact which made them one flesh, and blended their interests into one, being dissolved, the husband is thereby absolved from paying her antenuptial debts.

Though a woman marries the meanest plebeian, she does not lose the rank which she derived from her birth. But though she be descended of the lowest of the human race herself she may by marriage be raised, in this country, to any rank beneath the sovereignty.

No woman can by marriage confer a settlement in any parish on her husband. But every man who has a legal settlement himself, confers the same settlement by marriage on his wife.

It is no uncommon thing, in the present times, for the matrimonial bargain to be made so as that the wife shall retain the sole and absolute power of enjoying and disposing of her own fortune, in the same manner as if she were not married. But what is more inequitable, the husband is liable to pay all the debts which his wife may think proper to burden him with, even though she have abundance of her own to answer that purpose. He is also obliged to maintain her, though her circumstances be more opulent than his ; and if he die before her, she has a right to one third of his real estate. If, however, she die before him, he is not entitled to the value of one

single halfpenny, unless she has devised it to him by her will.

One of the most peculiar disadvantages in the condition of British women is, their being postponed to all males in the succession to the inheritance of landed estates, and generally allowed much smaller shares than the men, even of the money and effects of their fathers and ancestors, when this money or those effects are given them in the lifetime of their parents, or devised to them by will. If the father, indeed, dies intestate, they share equally with sons in all personal property.

When an estate in default of male heirs, descends to the daughters, the common custom of England is that the eldest shall not, in the same manner as an eldest son, inherit the whole, but all the daughters shall have an equal share in it. Westmoreland, however, and some other places, are exceptions to this general rule. The eldest daughter, there succeeds to the whole of the land, in preference to all the other sisters.

Women are not allowed to be members of our senate, nor to concern themselves much with our trades and professions. Both in their virgin and married state, a perpetual guardianship is, in some measure, exercised over them ; and she who, having laid a husband in the grave, enjoys an independent fortune, is almost the only woman among us, who can be called *entirely* free. They derive the greater part of the power which they enjoy, from their charms ; and these, when joined

to sensibility, often fully compensate, in this respect, for the little disadvantages they are laid under by law and custom.

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## CHAPTER XLIV.

### *On Female Knowledge.*

SCIENCE is to the mind what light is to the body ; and a blind, is just so much less shocking than an ignorant woman, as her mental are superior to her corporeal powers.

This species of accomplishment has been ridiculed, as raising the sex above that sphere where nature seems to have fixed their movements. Such is the paradox which has occasioned so much illiberality and sarcasm, and on which every woman of more knowledge than ordinary has been so often represented as a pedant.

Learning, it is also said, would improve women's talents of address, and only make them worse by rendering them more artful. This is likewise an idea which no man who enjoys the conversation and friendship of modest and good women, ever indulged. Whoever has the least regard for decency and truth, and is not destitute of all relish for the happiness which springs from the chaste sensibilities of an unpolluted heart, must own he has suffered much more from the selfishness and cunning of men than from any bad qualities in women. Indeed, the present situation of both, in this country, renders it impossible to

be otherwise. The masculine character is peculiarly obnoxious to the petrifying influence of vulgar opinion. Our young men are soon intoxicated with the fallacious maxims either of the gay or the busy world ; and both *extremes* are equally pernicious to *social* excellence. Ideas of the meanest and most sordid tendency absorb their minds at a very early period, which often render them ever after callous to the workings of humanity. With a strong predilection for wealth, independence or libertinism, they cheerfully prostitute all the powers of their minds and all the feelings of their hearts, in acquiring one or all of those objects. This unavoidably plunges them into all the machinations of pride, all the intrigues of gallantry, all the intricacies, risques, and vicissitudes of business. *Sentiment* consequently loses its weight, and sensibility its edge. Interest triumphs in the absence of principle, and nature relinquishes her dominion to art.

The most engaging dispositions of the female mind seldom undergo such a total revolution. If we except a few of the most perverse and unrelenting tempers, women, who are not flagrantly vicious, have seldom bad hearts. Their attachments, which constitute the most comfortable circumstances in domestic life, when innocent and undissembled, are more lasting and fervent than ours.

Let no ribaldry, therefore, however plausible and fallacious, divert the attention of females from intellectual improvement. In youth, all the powers of sensual or pleasurable

ble enjoyments are nature, and decline only as the passions cool. Then let the fair furnish themselves with a stock of other and more durable materials, that they may live with satisfaction, when these are no more.

It is when her fibres, and juices, and salts are tender and genial; that the earth receives her seed, that the laws of vegetation operate, and that all those plants take root and spring, which afterwards fill her bosom with plenty, and her face with beauty. Nor is there one barren or blighted spot, or any part of her surface more perfectly black and dismal than a mind involved in ignorance, or benumbed with insensibility.

In the season of youth, therefore, ladies should make it their study to cultivate their minds in such a manner as to render their intrinsic value as substantial as they wish their exterior to be *amiable*. Knowledge improves the human intellect, and endows it with all its excellence. It unmask to our view our own natures. It shows us what we are, and discloses all that can be hoped or dreaded from the circumstances we are in.—By the regulations it prescribes, and the delicacy it inspires, knowledge improves our taste for society, and imparts a finer relish to all our mutual attachments. It is the inseparable handmaid of happiness; opens a thousand avenues to indulgence of the purest and most exalted kind; unlocks to human view the mysteries of Providence; creates a heaven on earth; adds to the joys of the present the hopes of futurity; and when the objects

of this world expire on the senses, fills the whole heart with the glorious and animating prospects of another.

Without knowledge the possessions of time were imperfect, and the presages of eternity unsatisfying. Speak, ye who are old and uninformed, do not all things appear insipid? Your passions have lost their fire, your feelings their edge, your very senses the natural relish of their respective objects. Worse, not better, for all you have seen and heard, in the various stages of life, your every thought must be as insipid to others, as it is to yourselves. And, of all the empty prattle which fills an empty world, that of second childhood, because least natural and innocent, is most tiresome and impertinent. Yet, under a hoary head, the sacred and venerable emblem of wisdom and experience, how frequently do we meet with nothing but stupidity, puerility, insignificance, a mind continually out of humor, and a tongue that never is at rest!

Women can never arrive at that importance seemingly designed them by nature, while their genius is not cultivated, and their latent qualities called forth into view. Visible qualities, such as beauty, and the art of shewing it to advantage, may in those moments when the heart is softened by love, or the spirits elevated by wine, give the women a temporary ascendancy over the men, and enable them to bend them at pleasure; as in the case of Thais and Alexander. Such an ascendancy, however, is commonly fleeting and

transient. Cool reason soon resumes the place which passion had usurped; and the empire, which had been built on passion, tumbles *like the baseless fabric of a vision*; while that which is supported by *mental beauties*, stands the test of time, and the various incidents of life.

The sum of all human prudence is to provide against the worst. Personal beauty soon dies; but that which is intellectual is immortal. And though age be almost every where attended with grey hairs, shattered teeth, dim eyes, trembling joints, short breath, stiff limbs, and a shrivelled skin—there is a charm in wisdom, which, with all these melancholy circumstances, diffuses a pleasing serenity over the evening of our days. Indeed, nothing is so truly respectable at this period of humanity, when dignified, as it ought to be, by all the habits and principles of genuine benignity and honor. Age is then wisdom combined with experience. It is the very spirit or sum of all earthly perfection. It is an emblem, or earnest, of that future and divine fruition, which is the certain consequence, and happy consummation, of all mental and moral excellence.

Thus it is from knowledge alone, that the greatest and the best have found even solitude and retirement so singularly charming, and that the decline of life, with all its infirmities, so frequently glides away amidst the sweetest endearments and the serenest hopes. It is this which constitutes the only real and lasting distinction which can subsist between



mortals of the same species; which neither rank, nor title, nor fortune, however high or splendid, can destroy or confer; and which, on every emergency, gives an obvious and decided superiority to wealth, or power, or grandeur. By knowledge, women, as well as men, share the prerogative of intelligence, hold the dominion of the world, boast the lineaments of divinity, and aspire to an imitation of him who made them!

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## CHAPTER XLV.

### *Of Female Culture and Accomplishments in different ages.*

AMONG the Greeks, their mothers or other female relations taught young ladies the common female employments and customs of their country, and instilled into the minds of such as would receive it, a tincture of that stoical pride and heroism, for which their men were so much renowned. In every thing else they were very deficient, and their constant confinement added want of knowledge of the world to their want of education.

In the earlier periods of the great republic of Rome, the Romans being poor, and surrounded with rude and ferocious neighbours like themselves, were obliged to learn rigid economy, inflexible patriotism, and the art of war. These are all virtues of necessity in the infancy of almost every state.

The duties and employments of domestic

life, such as cookery, spinning, weaving and sewing, were taught the Roman women by their mothers or relations. These also superintended not only their serious studies, but even their amusements, which were always conducted with decency and moderation.— But when the Romans became rich with the plunder of their neighbours, the taste for the arts and sciences became more general. The education of women, therefore, began to be extended on a larger scale. To the domestic duties, taught them by their mothers, were added such parts of polite education as were thought necessary for cultivating their minds.

Cicero mentions with high encomiums, several ladies whose taste in eloquence and philosophy did honor to their sex ; and Quinctilian, with considerable applause, has quoted some of the letters of Cornelia.

There is a speech of Hortensia, preserved by Appian, which for elegance of language, and justness of thought, would have done honour to a Cicero, or a Demosthenes. What gave occasion to this speech, was the following circumstance: the triumvirs of Rome wanted a large sum of money for carrying on a war, and having met with great difficulties in raising it, they drew up a list of fourteen hundred of the richest of the ladies, intending to tax them. These ladies, after having in vain tried every method to evade so great an innovation, at last chose Hortensia for their speaker, and went along with her to the market-place, where she thus addressed

the triumvirs, while they were administering justice :

“ The unhappy women you see here imploring your justice and bounty, would never have presumed to appear in this place, had they not first made use of all other means which their natural modesty could suggest to them. Though our appearing may seem contrary to the rules of decency prescribed to our sex, which we have hitherto observed with all strictness ; yet the loss of our fathers, children, brothers and husbands, may sufficiently excuse us, especially when their unhappy deaths are made a pretence for our further misfortunes. You pretend they had offended and provoked you : But what injury have we women done, that we must be impoverished ? If we are blameable as the men, why do you not proscribe us too ? Have we declared you enemies to your country ? Have we suborned your soldiers, raised troops against you, or opposed you in the pursuit of those honors and offices which you claim ? We pretend not to govern the republic ; nor is it our ambition which has drawn the present misfortunes on our heads. Empire, dignities and honours are not for *us*. Why should we then contribute to a war in which we have no manner of *interest* ?

“ It is true, indeed, that in the Carthaginian war, our mothers assisted the republic, which was, at that time reduced to the utmost distress. But neither their houses, their lands, nor their moveables, were sold for that service. Some rings and a few jewels furnished

the supply. Nor was it constraint, nor violence, that forced these from them. What they contributed was the voluntary offering of generosity.

“What danger at present threatens Rome? If the Gauls or Parthians were encamped on the banks of the Tiber, or the Anio, you should find us no less zealous in the defence of our country than our mothers were before us. But it becomes not us; and we are resolved that we will not be any way concerned in civil war.

“Neither Marius, nor Cæsar, nor Pompey, ever thought of obliging us to take part in the domestic troubles which their ambition had raised. Even Sylla himself, who first set up tyranny in Rome, never harboured such an intention. And yet you assume the glorious title of *Reformers of the State*!—a title which will turn to your eternal infamy, if without the least regard to the laws of equity, you persist in your wicked resolution of plundering those of their lives and fortunes who have given you no just cause of offence.”

The triumvirs being offended at the boldness of the women, ordered them to be driven away. But the populace growing tumultuous, they were afraid of an insurrection, and reduced the list of the women to be taxed, to four hundred.

During the reign of chivalry in Europe, women endeavoured only to acquire such accomplishments as would excite heroes to fight for, and lovers to adore them. So far

were they from possessing any literary attainments, that they could hardly read the language of their respective countries.

In the following age the ladies found that the same arts which captivated a knight clad in armour and ignorance, were in vain practised upon the enlightened scholar and philosopher. Being conscious, therefore, that the way to please the men was to seem fond of what they approved, and dislike what they they disliked, they applied themselves to letters and philosophy, hoping to keep possession, by their talents, of what they had gained by their charms. Though these measures were not calculated to inspire love, and attract the heart, and consequently did not produce the effects which the ladies intended, yet they raised them in that period to a pitch of learning unknown in any other.

A love of gaiety, expense and parade, was introduced into Europe by the immense treasures of gold and silver imported from America, after the discovery and conquest of that country : and, perhaps, by the still greater riches accumulated by commerce. The French took the lead in this new mode of life, and soon disseminated it all over Europe. The education of their women, which before consisted in reading their own language, and in learning needle-work, was by degrees changed to vocal and instrumental music, dancing and dressing in the most fashionable manner; to which may be added the art of captivating and governing their men. This

flimsy pattern was copied by every other nation.

In Asia and Africa it is the interest of the men that almost no culture should be bestowed on the minds of their females, lest it should teach them to assert their rights of nature, and refuse to submit to the yoke of bondage so unjustly imposed upon them.— They are, however, taught all the personal graces; and particular care is taken to instruct them in the art of conversing with elegance and vivacity. Some of them are also taught to write, and the generality to read, that they may be able to read the Koran. But, instead of this, they more frequently spend their time in reading tales and romances; which, being related in all the lively imagery of the east, seldom fail to corrupt the minds of creatures shut up from the world, and consequently forming to themselves extravagant and romantic notions of all that is transacted in it.

Though they are never permitted to attend public worship in a mosque, they are obliged to learn by heart some prayers in Arabic, which when they assemble in a hall at certain hours, they repeat. They are enjoined always to wash themselves before praying; and indeed, the virtues of cleanliness, of chastity and obedience are so strongly and constantly inculcated on their minds, that, in spite of their general corruption of manners, there are several among them who, in their common deportment do credit to the instructions bestowed upon them. This indeed is

not much to be wondered at, when we consider the tempting recompense that is held out to them. They are, in paradise, to flourish for ever in the vigor of youth and beauty; and however old, ugly or deformed when they depart this life, are there to be immediately transformed into all that is fair, and all that is graceful.

It is a very laborious task to learn to read or write the Chinese language. Even among the men, it seems chiefly confined to such as aspire after employments of state. Women are seldom much instructed in it. Such as are rich, however, learn music, the modes of behaviour, and ceremonial punctilios of the country. The last of these cannot possibly be dispensed with. A failure in the least circumstance, as the number of bows, or the manner of making them to a superior, would infallibly stamp the mark of ignorance on the person so failing. Women are, in general, also taught a bashfulness and modesty of behaviour not to be met with in any other country.

In many parts of North America they never beat their children of either sex. This, they say, would only weaken and dispirit their minds without producing any good effect. When, therefore, a mother sees her daughter behave ill, instead of having recourse to a rod, she falls *a-crying*. The daughter naturally enquires the cause: the mother answers, because you disgrace me. This reproach seldom fails to produce an amendment.

Gentle treatment of children, we are informed, is absolutely necessary. The punishments inflicted in most other nations only make the Japanese more stubborn and refractory; and sometimes there, as well as in America, provoke them to commit suicide.

The sum of what has been said is this :—The education of women in Europe is perhaps too much calculated to inspire them with love of admiration, of trifling, and of amusement. In most other places of the globe it is infinitely worse. It tends to eradicate every moral sentiment, and introduce vice dressed up in the garb of voluptuous refinement.

That women should pour out their fair eyes in becoming adepts in learning, would be highly improper. Nature seems not to have intended them for the more intense and severe studies. The gaining of the laurels of literary fame would rob their brows of many of those charms which to them are more valuable, as they are by men more esteemed. Ignorance makes a female contemptible, pedantry makes her ridiculous. Both extremes should be avoided.



## CHAPTER XLVI.

*Of the necessary Mental Accomplishments of Ladies.*

THE degree of those intellectual accomplishments which women should aim at, it is not easy to determine. That must depend on the capacities, opportunities and encouragements which they severally enjoy.

*History*, in which may be included biography and memoirs, ought to employ a considerable share of female attention. Those pictures which it exhibits of the passions operating in real life, and genuine characters ; of virtues to be imitated, and of vices to be shunned ; of the effects of both on society and individuals ; of the mutability of human affairs ; of the conduct of divine Providence ; of the great consequences that often arise from little events ; of the weakness of power, and the wanderings of prudence in the human race ; with the sudden, unexpected, and frequently unaccountable revolutions that dash triumphant wickedness, or disappoint presumptuous hope—the pictures which *history* exhibits of all these have been ever reckoned by the best judges, among the richest sources of instruction and entertainment.

*Voyages and Travels*—too, are very instructive and entertaining. How amusing are they to the curiosity, how, enlarging to our prospects of mankind ! They make us usefully inquisitive, and furnish us with subjects of reflection.

There is not a son or daughter of Adam who has not occasion for *Geography*. It is often useful in conversation; and a competent knowledge of it may be acquired with little application, but much amusement.

The principal facts or great outlines of *Astronomy* are beautiful as well as improving.

Some of them present the most interesting scenes. All contain the most pleasing discoveries. They open and enlarge the mind; they dilate and humanize the heart; they remind us that we are citizens of the universe; they shew us how small a part we fill in the immense orb of being. Amid the amplitude of such contemplations, superfluous titles shrink away. Wealth and grandeur "hide their diminished heads." A generous ambition rises in the thoughtful mind, to approve itself to the all-inspecting eye of *Him* to whom none of his works are indifferent.

In *Poetry* of all kinds, but chiefly of the sublimer forms, where nature, virtue, and religion are painted and embellished with all the beauties of a chaste, yet elevated imagination what a field is opened within the reach, and adapted to the turn of the female faculties! What a profusion of intellectual ornament is spread before them, for memory to collect, and for reflection to work upon! How many sprightly, delightful, and lofty ideas do here pass before the mental eye, all dressed in the brightest colors! How strangely inexcusable must those be who complain at any time of want of amusement, when the genius and invention of every illuminated age have taken

such happy pains to supply the noblest. To obtain all the poetical works of the British Poets, would be expensive : we therefore would recommend a judicious choice of the many volumes published of Selections, in particular a very excellent work lately (1807) published for Mr. *Bumstead*, viz. "Select Collection of Poems, and other elegant poetical Extracts by the most celebrated authors, from *Pope, Goldsmith, Blair, Young, Gray, Cowper, Watts, Parnel, More, Rowe,*" &c.

How much are both sexes indebted to the elegant pens of the *Spectator, Rambler, Adventurer, Connoisseur, Idler, &c.* for a species of instruction better fitted perhaps, than most others of human device, to delight and improve at the same moment ! Such is its extent, its diversity, its familiarity, its ease, its playful manner, its immediate reference to scenes and circumstances with which we are every day conversant.

There are very few novels that can be read with safety ; and fewer still that convey any useful instruction. But as ladies *will* read novels, the best and most innocent productions of this kind are those of *Richardson, Cumberland, Miss Burney ; Mrs. Helme's Louisa, and Miss Blower's Features from Life ; Caroline of Litchfield, the Vicar of Wakefield, and a few others.*

The most obvious branches both of *Natural Philosophy, and Natural History*, should engage at least, some portion of our time. That they are so seldom and so slightly tho't of, is rather a melancholy reflection. Does

creation, through her infinitely extended and infinitely diversified scenery display innumerable wonders? Have these been traced with skill and accuracy by many learned and many laborious hands? Are they laid open to us, and almost pressed upon us from every quarter? And can we, with a giddy eye, turn away from this noble and entertaining spectacle, to gaze on the meanest ornament of beauty, or the silliest pageant of vanity?

The French and Italian, as well as the Latin and Greek languages, may be read by the fair sex with much pleasure and advantage. By these means their taste will be improved, and a never-failing source of instruction will be opened. Several ladies of rank and fashion, of the present day, make Virgil and Homer their companions, two or three mornings every week.

One half hour, or more, either before or immediately after breakfast, should be constantly devoted to the attentive perusal of some part of *Holy Writ*. It is the basis on which our religion is founded. From this practice more real benefit will be reaped than can be supposed by those who have never made the experiment.

The scriptures present religion to us in the most engaging dress. They communicate truths which philosophy could never investigate, and in a style which poetry can never equal. Calculated alike to profit and to please, they inform the understanding, elevate the affections, and entertain the imagination. Indicted under the influence of that Being to

whom all hearts are known, and all events foreknown, they suit mankind in all situations, grateful as the manna that descended from above, and suited to every palate. An *Eliza Howe*, an *Hannah More* have lived and died as pious and amiable ornaments of the sex : Let them have many followers.

The fairest productions of human wit, after a few perusals like gathered flowers, wither in our hands, and lose their fragrance : Is it so with the sacred pages ? No, indeed—To the heaven-born soul, to one who has been “renewed in the spirit of his mind,” who has “passed from death unto life,” (and to such a character only will the observation apply) the scriptures are unfading plants of paradise—the more they are attended to by such a character, the more beautiful they will appear. They are the “joy and the rejoicing of their heart.” Their bloom appears to be daily heightened. Fresh odours are diffused, and new sweets extracted from them. “In commending to your care this Standard” (in the elegant address of a lady to a military company) “we commit to your sacred keeping our virtue, our honor, and our Holy Faith !”

The scriptures have been studied and admired by the greatest and best of men, as well as women. Whatever instruction or amusement may be derived from human compositions, let it always be remembered that the sacred writings alone contain that wisdom, “which maketh wise unto salvation.”

Controversy on religious subjects should seldom or never be meddled with. Such

books ought to be read as are addressed to the Heart, which inspire pious and devout affections, and tend to regulate the conduct.

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## CHAPTER XLVII.

### *Of the Monastic Life.*

THE venerable *Bede* has given us a very striking picture of Monastic enormities, in his epistle to Egbert. From this we learn that many young men who had no title to the monastic profession, got possession of monasteries : where, instead of engaging in the defence of their country, as their age and rank required, they indulged themselves in the most dissolute indolence.

We learn from Dugdale, that in the reign of Henry the Second, the nuns of Amsbury abbey in Wiltshire were expelled from that religious house on account of their incontinence. And to exhibit in the most lively colors the total corruption of monastic chastity, bishop Burnet informs us in his "History of the reformation," that when the nunneries were visited by the command of Henry the VIII, "whole houses almost, were found whose vows had been made in vain."

When we consider to what oppressive indolence, to what a variety of wretchedness and guilt, the young and fair inhabitants of the cloister were frequently betrayed, we ought to admire those benevolent authors who, when the tide of religious prejudice ran

very strong in favor of monastic virginity, had spirit enough to oppose the torrent, and to caution the devout and tender sex against so dangerous a profession. It is in this point of view that the character of Erasmus appears with the most amiable lustre ; and his name ought to be eternally dear to the female world in particular. Though his studies and constitution led him almost to idolize those eloquent fathers of the church who have magnified this kind of life, his good sense and his accurate survey of the human race, enabled him to judge of the misery in which female youth was continually involved by a precipitate choice of the veil. He knew the successful arts by which the subtle and rapacious monks inveigled young women of opulent families into the cloister ; and he exerted his lively and delicate wit in opposition to so pernicious an evil.

The writings of many eminent authors have been levelled against the abuses of the monastic life. But several of these, like the noted works of the humorous Rabelais, appear to have flowed from a spirit as wanton and licentious as ever lurked in a convent. It is not thus with Erasmus. His productions are written with admirable pleasantry, and seem to have been dictated by a chaste desire to promote the felicity of the fair sex.

In those nations of Europe where nunneries still exist, how many lovely victims are continually sacrificed to the avarice or absurd ambition of inhuman parents ! The misery

of these victims has been painted with great force by some benevolent writers of France.

In most of those pathetic histories that are founded on the abuse of convents, the misery originates from the parent, and falls upon the child. The reverse has sometimes happened; and there are examples of unhappy parents, who have been rendered miserable by the religious perversity of a daughter. In the fourteenth volume of that very amusing work, *Les Causes Celebres*, a work which is said to have been the favorite reading of Voltaire, there is a striking history of a girl under age, who was tempted by pious artifices to settle herself in a convent, in express opposition to parental authority. Her parents, who had in vain tried the most tender persuasion, endeavoured at last to redeem their lost child, by a legal process against the nunnery in which she was imprisoned. The pleadings on this remarkable trial may, perhaps, be justly reckoned among the finest pieces of eloquence that the lawyers of France have produced. Monsieur Gillet, the advocate for the parents, represented, in the boldest and most affecting language, the extreme baseness of this religious seduction. His eloquence appeared to have fixed the sentiments of the judges; but the cause of superstition was pleaded by an advocate of equal power, and it finally prevailed. The unfortunate parents of Maria Vernal (for this was the name of the unfortunate girl) were condemned to resign her for ever, and to make a considerable payment to



those artful devotees who had piously robbed them of their child.

When we reflect on the various evils that have arisen in convents, we have the strongest reason to rejoice and glory in that reformation by which the nunneries of England were abolished. Yet it would not be candid or just to consider all these as the mere harbours of licentiousness ; since we are told that, at the time of their suppression, some of our religious houses were very honorably distinguished by the purity of their inhabitants. "The visitors," says Bishop Burnett, "interceded earnestly for a nunnery in Oxfordshire, Godstow, where there was great strictness of life, and to which most of the young gentlewomen of the country were sent to be bred ; so that the gentry of the country desired the king would spare the house : yet all was ineffectual."

In this point of view, much undoubtedly, may be said in favour of convents. Yet when the arguments on both sides are fairly weighed, it is presumed, that every true friend to female innocence will rejoice in those sensible regulations which our Catholic neighbors have lately made respecting nunneries, and which seem to promise their universal abolition.

As convents, for many ages, were the treasures of all the learning that remained upon earth, one is rather surprized to find so few monastic ladies, who have bequeathed to the world any literary production. Perhaps, indeed, many a fair and chaste author has ex-

isted, whose name and works, have been unjustly buried in sudden oblivion.

Juana Inez de la Cruz, a native of the New Hemisphere, was so eminent for her poetical talents, that she had been honoured with the title of a Tenth Muse.

A short account of this lady, not much known in Europe, with a specimen of her poetry, will no doubt be acceptable to female readers.

Juana was born in November 1651, at the distance of a few leagues from the city of Mexico. Her father was one of the many Spanish gentlemen, who sought to improve a scanty fortune by an establishment in America, where he married a lady of that country, descended from Spanish parents. Their daughter Juana was distinguished in her infancy by an uncommon passion for literature, and a wonderful felicity in the composition of Spanish verses. Her parents, sent her, when she was eight years old, to reside with her uncle in the city of Mexico. She had there the advantage of a learned education; and, as her extraordinary talents attracted universal regard, she was patronised by the lady of the viceroy, the Marquis de Mancera, and, at the age of seventeen, was received into his family. A Spanish economist of Juana relates a remarkable anecdote, which, he says, was communicated to him by the viceroy himself. That nobleman, astonished by the extensive learning of young Juana, invited forty of the most eminent literati that his country could afford, to try the extent and solidity of Juana's

erudition. The young female scholar was freely but politely questioned, on the different branches of science, by theologians, philosophers, mathematicians, historians, and poets ; “ and as a royal galleon,” says our Spanish author, “ would defend herself against a few shallops that might attack her, so did Juana Inez extricate herself from the various questions, arguments and rejoinders, that each in his own province proposed to her.”

The applause which she received, on this signal display of her accomplishments, was far from inspiring the modest Juana with vanity or presumption. Indeed, a pious humility was her most striking characteristic. Her life amounted only to forty-four years ; and of these she passed twenty-seven, distinguished by the most exemplary exercise of all the religious virtues, in the convent of St. Geronimo. Her delight in books was extreme, and she is said to have possessed a library of four thousand volumes ; but towards the close of her life she made a striking sacrifice to charity, by selling her darling books for the relief of the poor. Few female authors have been more celebrated in life, or in death more lamented. The collection of her works, in three quarto volumes, contains a number of panegyrics, in verse and prose, bestowed on this chaste poetess by the most illustrious characters both of Old and New Spain. The most sensible of the Spanish critics, Father Feyjoo, has made this general remark on Juana's compositions—“ that they excel in ease and elegance, but are

deficient in energy ;" a failing the more remarkable, as the pious enthusiasm of this poetical nun was so great, that she wrote in her own blood a profession of her own faith. It may be observed, however, in answer to her critic, that most of Juana's verses are written on subjects, where poetical energy was not to be expected. Many of her poems are occasional compliments to her particular friends ; and in her sacred dramas, the absurd superstitions of her country were sufficient to annihilate all poetical sublimity.

In one of her short productions, she ascribes the injustice of men towards her own sex. An imitation of this performance, in English, is as follows :

" Weak men ! who without reason aim  
To load poor woman with abuse,  
Not seeing that yourselves produce  
The very evils that you blame ;  
You 'gainst her firm resistance strive ;  
And, having struck her judgment mute,  
Soon to her levity impute  
What from your labour you derive.

Of woman's weakness much afraid,  
Of your own prowess still you boast ;  
Like the vain child who makes a ghost,  
Then fears what he himself has made.

Her, whom your arms have once embrac'd,

You think presumptuously to find,  
When she is woo'd, as Thais kind,  
When wedded as Lucretia chaste.

How rare a fool must he appear,  
Whose folly mounts to such a pass,  
That first he breathes upon the glass,  
Then grieves because it is not clear !

Still with unjust, ungrateful pride,  
You meet both favour and disdain ;  
The firm as cruel you arraign,  
The tender you as weak deride.

Your foolish humour none can please ;  
Since, judging all with equal phlegm,  
One for her rigor you condemn,  
And one you censure for her ease.

What wond'rous gifts must her adorn,  
Who would your lasting love engage,  
When rigorous nymphs excite your rage,  
And easy fair ones raise your scorn !

But while you shew your pride or power,  
With tyrant passions vainly hot,  
She's only blest who heeds you not,  
And leaves you all in happy hour."

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## CHAPTER XLVIII.

### *Of the Degrees of Sentimental Attachment at different Periods.*

IN the earlier ages, sentiment in love does not appear to have been much attended to. When Abraham sent his servant to court a bride for his son Isaac, we do not so much as hear that Isaac was consulted on the matter :

nor is there even a suspicion, that he might refuse or dislike the wife which his father had selected for him.

From the manner in which Rebecca was solicited, we learn, that women were not then courted in person by the lover, but by a proxy, whom he, or his parents, deputed in his stead. We likewise see, that this proxy did not, in modern times, endeavour to gain the affection of the lady he was sent to, by enlarging on the personal properties, and mental qualifications of the lover ; but by the richness and magnificence of the presents he made to her and her relations.

Presents have been, from the earliest ages, and are to this day the mode of transacting all kinds of business in the East. When a favour is to be asked of a superior, one cannot hope to obtain it without a present. Courtship, therefore, having been anciently transacted in this manner, it is plain, that it was only considered in the same light as any other negotiable business, and not as a matter of sentiment, and of the heart.

In the courtship, however, or rather purchase of a wife by Jacob, we meet with something like sentiment ; for when he found that he was not possessed of money or goods, equal to the price which was probably set upon her, he not only condescended to purchase her by servitude, but even seemed much disappointed when the tender-eyed Leah was faithlessly imposed upon him instead of the beautiful Rachel.

The ancient Gauls, Germans, and neighboring nations of the North, had so much veneration for the sex in general, that in courtship they behaved with a spirit of gallantry, and shewed a degree of sentiment, to which *those* who called them Barbarians, never arrived. Not contented with getting possession of the person of his mistress, a northern lover could not be satisfied without the sincere affection of her heart; nor was his mistress ever to be gained but by such methods as plainly indicated to her the tenderest attachment from the most deserving man.

The women of Scandinavia were not to be courted but by the most assiduous attendance, seconded by such warlike achievements as the custom of the country had rendered necessary to make a man deserving of his mistress. On these accounts, we frequently find a lover accosting the object of his passion by a minute and circumstantial detail of all his exploits, and all his accomplishments. "We fought with swords," says King Regner, in a beautiful ode composed by himself, in memory of the deeds of his former days, "that day wherein I saw ten thousand of my foes rolling in the dust, near a promontory of England. A dew of blood distilled from our swords. The arrows which flew in search of the helmets, bellowed through the air. The pleasure of that day was truly exquisite.

We fought with swords. A young man should march early to the conflict of arms. Man should attack man, or bravely resist him. In this hath always consisted the nobility of

the warrior. He who aspires to the love of his mistress, ought to be dauntless in the clash of swords.

The descendants of the northern nations, long after they had plundered and repeopled the greatest part of Europe, retained nearly the same ideas of love, and practised the same methods in declaring it, that they had imbibed from their ancestors. "Love," says William of Montagnogout, "engages to the most amiable conduct. Love inspires the greatest actions. Love has no will but that of the object beloved, nor seeks any thing but what will augment her glory. You cannot love, nor ought to be beloved, if you ask any thing that virtue condemns. Never did I form a wish that could wound the heart of my beloved, nor delight in a pleasure that was inconsistent with her delicacy."

The method of addressing females, among some of the tribes of American Indians, is the most simple that possibly can be devised. When the lover goes to visit his mistress, he only begs leave, by signs, to enter her hut.— After obtaining this, he goes in, and sits down by her in the most respectful silence. If she suffers him to remain there without interruption, her doing so is consenting to his suit. If, however, the lover has any thing given him to eat and drink, it is a refusal; though the woman is obliged to sit by him until he has finished his repast. He then retires in silence.

In Canada, courtship is not carried on with that coy reserve, and seeming secrecy, which



politeness has introduced among the inhabitants of civilized nations. When a man and woman meet, though they never saw each other before, if he is captivated with her charms, he declares his passion in the plainest manner; and she, with the same simplicity, answers, Yes, or No, without further deliberation. "That female reserve," says an ingenious writer,\* "that seeming reluctance to enter into the married state, observable in polite countries, is the work of art, and not of nature. The history of every uncultivated people amply proves it. It tells us, that their women not only speak with freedom the sentiments of their hearts, but even blush not to have these sentiments made as public as possible."

In Formosa, however, they differ so much from the simplicity of the Canadians, that it would be reckoned the greatest indecency in the man to declare, or in the woman to hear, a declaration of the passion of love. The lover is, therefore, obliged to depute his mother, sister, or some female relation; and from any of these the soft tale may be heard without the least offence to delicacy.

In Spain, the women had formerly no voice in disposing of themselves in matrimony.—But as the empire of common sense began to extend itself, they began to claim privilege, at least of being consulted in the choice of the partners of their lives. Many fathers and guardians, hurt by this female innovation,

\* Dr. Alexander.

and puffed up with Spanish pride, still insisted on forcing their daughters to marry according to their pleasure, by means of duennas, locks, hunger and even sometimes of poison and daggers. But as nature will revolt against every species of oppression and injustice, the ladies have for some time begun to assert their own rights. The authority of fathers and guardians begins to decline, and lovers find themselves obliged to apply to the affections of the fair, as well as to the pride and avarice of their relations.

The nightly musical serenades of mistresses by their lovers are still in use. The gallant composes some love sonnets, as expressive as he can, not only of the situation of his heart, but of every particular circumstance between him and the lady, not forgetting to lard them with the most extravagant encomiums on her beauty and merit. These he sings in the night below her window accompanied with his lute, or sometimes with a whole band of music. The more piercing cold the air, the more the lady's heart is supposed to be thawed with the patient sufferance of her lover, who, from night to night, frequently continues this exercise for many hours, heaving the deepest sighs, and casting the most piteous looks towards the window; at which if his goddess at last deigns to appear, and drops him a courtesy, he is superlatively paid for all his watching; but if she blesses him with a smile, he is ready to run distracted.

In Italy the manner of addressing the ladies, so far as it relates to serenading, nearly resembles that of Spain. The Italian, however, goes a step farther than the Spaniard. He endeavors to blockade the house where his fair one lives, so as to prevent the entrance of any rival. If he marries the lady who cost him all this trouble and attendance, he shuts her up for life: If not, she becomes the object of his eternal hatred, and he too frequently endeavours to revenge by poison the success of his happier rival.

In one circumstance relating to courtship, the Italians are said to be particular. They protract the time of it as long as possible, well knowing that, even with all the little ills attending it, a period thus employed is one of the sweetest of human life.

A French lover, with the word sentiment perpetually in his mouth, seems by every action to have excluded it from his heart. He places his whole confidence in his exterior air and appearance. He dresses for his mistress, dances for her, flutters constantly about her, helps her to lay on her rouge, and to place her patches. He attends her round the whole circle of amusements, chatters to her constantly, whistles and sings, and plays the fool with her. Whatever be his station, every thing gaudy and glittering within the sphere of it is called in to his assistance, particularly splendid carriages and tawdry liveries; but if, by the help of all these, he cannot make an impression on the fair one's heart, it costs him nothing but a few shrugs of his shoul-

ders, two or three silly exclamations, and as many stanzas of some satirical song against her; and, as it is impossible for a Frenchman to live without an amour, he immediately betakes himself to another.

There is hardly any such thing among people of fashion as courtship. Matters are generally so ordered by parents and guardians that to a bride and bridegroom the day of marriage is often the second time of their meeting. In many countries, to be married in this manner would be reckoned the greatest of misfortunes. In France it is little regarded. In the fashionable world few people are greater strangers to, or more indifferent about each other, than husband and wife; and any appearance of fondness between them, or their being seen frequently together, would infallibly make them forfeit the reputation of the *ton*, and be laughed at by all polite company. On this account, nothing is more common than to be acquainted with a lady without knowing her husband, or visiting the husband without ever seeing his wife.

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## CHAPTER XLIX.

### *A View of Matrimony in three different lights.*

THE marriage life is always an insipid, a vexatious, or an happy condition. The first is, when two people of no taste meet together, upon such a settlement as has been thought reasonable by parents and conveyancers, from

an exact valuation of the land and cash of both parties. In this case, the young lady's person is no more regarded than the house and improvements in purchase of an estate ; but she goes with her fortune, rather than her fortune with her. These make up the crowd or vulgar of the rich, and fill up the lumber of the human race, without beneficence towards those below them, or respect towards those above them ; and lead a despicable, independent and useless life, without sense of the laws of kindness, good nature, mutual offices, and the elegant satisfactions which flow from reason and virtue.

The vexatious life arises from a conjunction of two people of quick taste and resentment, put together for reasons well known to their friends, in which especial care is taken to avoid (what they think the chief of evils) poverty ; and ensure to them riches, with every evil besides. These good people live in a constant constraint before company, and when alone, revile each other's person and conduct. In company, they are in purgatory ; when by themselves, in hell.

The happy marriage is, where two persons meet, and voluntarily make choice of each other, without principally regarding or neglecting the circumstances of fortune or beauty. These may still love in spite of adversity or sickness. The former, we may, in some measure, defend ourselves from, the other is the common lot of humanity. Love has nothing to do with riches or state. Solitude;

with the person beloved, has a pleasure, even in a woman's mind, beyond show or pomp.

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## CHAPTER L.

### *Of Betrothing and Marriage.*

AT a very early period families who lived in a friendly manner, fell upon a method of securing their children to each other by what is called in the sacred writings betrothing.— This was agreeing on a price to be paid for the bride, the time when it should be paid, and when she should be delivered into the hands of her husband.

There were, according to the Talmudists, three ways of betrothing. The first by a written contract. The second, by a verbal agreement, accompanied with a piece of money. And the third, by the parties coming together, and living as husband and wife; which might have been as properly called marriage as betrothing.

The written contract was in the following manner—"On such a day, month and year, A the son of B has said to D the daughter of E, be thou my spouse according to the law of Moses and of the Israelites; and I will give thee as a dowry, the sum of two hundred suzims, as it is ordered by our law. And the said D hath promised to be his spouse upon the conditions aforesaid, which the said A doth promise to perform on the day of marriage. And to this the said A doth hereby

bind himself and all that he hath, to the very cloak upon his back; engages himself to love, honour, feed, clothe and protect her, and to perform all that is generally implied in contracts of marriage in favour of the Israelitish wives."

The verbal agreement was made in the presence of a sufficient number of witnesses, by the man saying to the woman, "Take this money as a pledge that at such a time I will take thee to be my wife." A woman who was thus betrothed or bargained for, was almost in every respect by the law considered as already married.

Before the legislation of Moses "marriages among the Jews," say the Rabbies, "were agreed upon by the parents and relations of both sides. When this was done, the bridegroom was introduced to his bride. Presents are mutually exchanged, the contract signed before witnesses, and the bride, having remained some time with her relations, was sent away to the habitation of her husband, in the night, with singing, dancing and the sound of musical instruments."

By the institution of Moses, the Rabbies tell us, the contract of marriage was read in the presence of, and signed by, at least ten witnesses, who were free, and of age. The bride, who had taken care to bathe herself the night before, appeared in all her splendour, but veiled, in imitation of Rebecca, who veiled herself when she came in sight of Isaac. She was then given to the bridegroom by her parents, in words to this pur-

pose: "Take her according to the law of Moses." And he received her, by saying, "I take her according to that law." Some blessings were then pronounced upon the young couple, both by the parents and the rest of the company.

The blessings or prayers generally run in this style: Blessed art thou, O Lord of heaven and earth, who hast created man in thine own likeness, and hast appointed women to be his partner and companion! Blessed art thou, who fillest Zion with joy for the multitude of her children! Blessed art thou, who sendest gladness to the bridegroom and his bride! who hast ordained for them love, joy, tenderness, peace and mutual affection. Be pleased to bless, not only this couple, but Judah and Jerusalem, with songs of joy, and praise for the joy that thou givest them, by the multitude of their sons and of their daughters."

After the virgins had sung a marriage song, the company partook of a repast, the most magnificent the parties could afford; after which they began a dance, the men round the bridegroom, the women round the bride. They pretended that this dance was of divine institution, and an essential part of the ceremony. The bride was then carried to the nuptial bed, and the bridegroom left in the chamber with her. The company again returned to their feasting and rejoicing; and the Rabbies inform us, that this feasting, when the bride was a widow, lasted only three days, but seven if she was a virgin.



At the birth of a son, the father planted a cedar; and at that of a daughter, he planted a pine. Of these trees the nuptial bed was constructed, when the parties, at whose birth they were planted, entered into the married state.

The Assyrians had a court, or tribunal, whose only business was to dispose of young women in marriage, and to see the laws of that union properly executed. What these laws were, or how the execution of them was enforced, are circumstances which have not been handed down to us. But the erecting a court solely for the purpose of taking cognizance of them, suggests an idea that they were many and various.

Among the Greeks, the multiplicity of male and female deities who were concerned in the affairs of love, made the invocations and sacrifices, on a matrimonial occasion, a very tedious affair. Fortunate omens gave great joy; and the most fortunate of all others, was a pair of turtles seen in the air, as those birds were reckoned the truest emblems of conjugal love and fidelity. If, however, one of them was seen alone, it infallibly denoted separation, and all the ills attending an unhappy marriage.

On the wedding day, the bride and bridegroom were richly dressed, and adorned with garlands of herbs and flowers. The bride was conducted in the evening to the house of her husband in a chariot, seated between the husband and one of his relations. When she alighted from the chariot, the axle-tree of

it was burnt, to signify that there was no method left for her to return back. As soon as the young couple entered the house, figs and other fruits were thrown upon their heads to denote plenty; and a sumptuous entertainment was ready for them to partake of, to which all the relations on both sides were invited.

The bride was lighted to bed by a number of torches, according to her quality; and the company returned in the morning, to salute the new married couple, and to sing *epithalamia* at the door of their bed-chamber.

*Epithlamia* were marriage songs, anciently sung in praise of the bride or bridegroom, wishing them happiness, prosperity and a numerous issue.

Among the Romans there were three different kinds of marriage. The ceremony of the first consisted in the young couple eating a cake together, made only of wheat, salt, and water. The second kind was celebrated by the parties solemnly pledging their faith to each other, by giving and receiving a piece of money. This was the most common way of marrying among the Romans. It continued in use, even after they became Christians. When writings were introduced to testify that a man and a woman had become husband and wife, and also, that the husband had settled a dower upon his bride, these writings were called *Tabulæ Dotales* (dowry tables;) and hence perhaps the words in our marriage ceremony, "I thee endow."

The third kind of marriage was, when a man and woman, having cohabited for some time and had children, found it expedient to continue together. In this case, if they made up the matter between themselves, it became a valid marriage, and the children were considered as legitimate.

Something similar to this is the present custom in Scotland. There, if a man live with, and have children by a woman, though he do not marry her till he be upon his death-bed, all the children are thereby legitimated, and become entitled to the honors and estates of their father. The case is the same in Holland, and some parts of Germany ; with this difference only, that all the children to be legitimated must appear with the father and mother in church, at the ceremony of their marriage.

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## CHAPTER LI.

### *On the Choice of a Husband.*

ASSIST me, ye Nine,  
While the youth I define,  
With whom I in wedlock would class ;  
And ye blooming fair,  
Lend a listening ear,  
To approve of the man as you pass.

Not the changeable fry  
Who love, nor know why,  
But follow bedup'd by their passions :

Such votaries as these,  
Are like waves of the seas,  
And steer'd by their own inclination.

The hectoring blade  
How unfit for the maid,  
Where meekness and modesty reigns !  
Such a thundering Bully  
I'll speak against truly,  
Whatever I get for my pains.

Not the dogmatic elf,  
Whose great all is himself,  
Whose alone ipse dixit is law ;  
What a figure he'll make,  
How like Momus he'll speak  
With sneering burlesque, a pshaw ! pshaw !

Not the covetous wretch  
Whose heart's at full stretch  
To gain an inordinate treasure ;  
Him leave with the rest,  
And such mortals detest,  
Who sacrifice life without measure.

The fluttering fop,  
How empty his top !  
Nay but some call him coxcomb, I trow ;  
But 'tis losing your time,  
He's not worth half a rhyme,  
Let the fag ends of prose bind his brow.

The guttling sot,  
What a conduit his throat !  
How beastly and vicious his life !  
Where drunkards prevail,

Whole families feel,  
Much more an affectionate wife.

One character yet,  
I with sorrow repeat,  
And O ! that the number were less ;  
’Tis the blasphemous crew :  
What a pattern they’ll shew  
To their hapless and innocent race !

Let wisdom then shine  
In the youth that is mine,  
Whilst virtue his footsteps impress ;  
Such I’d choose for my mate,  
Whether sooner or late :  
Tell me, Ladies, what think you of this ?

“ The chief point to be regarded,” says Lady Pennington in her Advice to her Daughters, “ in the choice of a companion for life, is a really virtuous principle—an unaffected goodness of heart. Without this, you will be continually shocked by indecency, and pained by impiety. So numerous have been the unhappy victims to the ridiculous opinion, *a reformed libertine makes the best husband*—that, did not experience daily evince the contrary, one would believe it impossible for a girl who has a tolerable degree of common understanding, to be made the dupe of so erroneous a position, which has not the least shadow of reason for its foundation, and which a small share of observation will prove to be false in fact. A man who has been long conversant with the worst sort of women, is

very apt to contract a bad opinion of, and a contempt for, the sex in general. Incapable of esteeming any, he is suspicious of all ; jealous without cause, angry without provocation, his own disturbed imagination is a continued source of ill-humour. To this is frequently joined a bad habit of body, the natural consequence of an irregular life, which gives an additional sourness to the temper. What rational prospect of happiness can there be with such a companion ? And, that this is the general character of those who are called *reformed rakes*, observation will certify. But, admit there may be some exceptions, it is a hazard, upon which no considerate woman would venture the peace of her whole future life. The vanity of those girls who believe themselves capable of working miracles of this kind, and who give up their persons to men of libertine principles, upon the wild expectation of reclaiming them, justly deserves the disappointment which it will generally meet with ; for, believe me, a wife is, of all persons, the least likely to succeed in such an attempt.—Be it your care to find that virtue in a lover which you must never hope to form in a husband. Good sense, and good nature, are almost equally requisite. If the former is wanting, it will be next to an impossibility for you to esteem the person, of whose behaviour you may have cause to be ashamed. Mutual esteem is as essential to happiness in the married state, as mutual affection. Without the latter, every day will bring with it some fresh cause of vexation, until repeated

quarrels produce a coolness, which will settle into an irreconcilable aversion, and you will become, not only each other's torment, but the object of contempt to your family, and to your acquaintance.

“ This quality of good nature, is, of all others, the most difficult to be ascertained, on account of the general mistake of blending it with good-humour, as if they were in themselves the same ; whereas, in fact, no two principles of action are more essentially different. But this may require some explanation—By good-nature, I mean that true benevolence, which partakes in the felicity of all mankind, which promotes the felicity of every individual within the reach of its ability, which relieves the distressed, comforts the afflicted, diffuses blessings, and communicates happiness, far as its sphere of action can extend ; and which, in the private scenes of life, will shine conspicuous in the dutiful son, in the affectionate husband, the indulgent father, the faithful friend, and in the compassionate master both to man and beast. Good-humour, on the other hand, is nothing more than a cheerful, pleasing deportment, arising either from a natural gaiety of mind, or from an affection of popularity, joined to an affability of behavior, the result of good breeding, and from a ready compliance with the taste of every company. This kind of mere good-humour, is, by far, the most striking quality. It is frequently mistaken, for, and complimented with the superior name of *real good nature*.. A man, by this specious appearance,

has often acquired that appellation who, in all the actions of his private life, has been a morose, cruel, revengeful, sullen, haughty tyrant. Let them put on the cap, whose temples fit the galling wreath !

“ A man of a truly benevolent disposition, and formed to promote the happiness of all around him, may sometimes, perhaps, from an ill habit of body, an accidental vexation, or from a commendable openness of heart, above the meanness of disguise, be guilty of little sallies of peevishness, or of ill-humour, which, carrying the appearance of ill-nature, may be unjustly thought to proceed from it, by persons who are unacquainted with his true character, and who take ill-humour and ill-nature to be synonymous terms, though in reality they bear not the least analogy to each other. In order to the forming a right judgment, it is absolutely necessary to observe this distinction, which will effectually secure you from the dangerous error of taking the shadow for the substance, an irretrievable mistake, pregnant with innumerable consequent evils !

“ From what has been said, it plainly appears, that the criterion of this amiable virtue is not to be taken from the general opinion ; mere good-humour being, to all intents and purposes, sufficient in this particular, to establish the public voice in favor of a man utterly devoid of every humane and benevolent affection of heart. It is only from the less conspicuous scenes of life, the more retired sphere of action, from the artless tenor of domestic conduct, that the real character can, with any



certainly be drawn. These, undisguised, proclaim the man. But, as they shun the glare of light, nor court the noise of popular applause, they pass unnoticed, and are seldom known till after an intimate acquaintance. The best method, therefore, to avoid the deception in this case, is to lay no stress on outward appearances, which are too often fallacious, but to take the rule of judging from the simple unpolished sentiments of those whose dependent connections give them undeniable certainty ; who not only see, but who hourly feel, the good or bad effect of that disposition, to which they are subjected. By this, I mean, that if a man is equally respected, esteemed, and beloved by his dependants and domestics, you may justly conclude, he has that true good nature, that real benevolence, which delights in communicating felicity, and enjoys the satisfaction it diffuses. But if by these he is despised and hated, served merely from a principle of fear, devoid of affection, which is ever easily discoverable, whatever may be his public character, however favourable the general opinion, be assured, that his disposition is such as can never be productive of domestic happiness. I have been the more particular on this head, as it is one of the most essential qualifications to be regarded, and of all others the most liable to be mistaken.

“ Never be prevailed with, my dear, to give your hand to a person defective in these material points. Secure of virtue, of good-nature, and understanding, in a husband, you

may be secure of happiness. Without the two former it is unattainable. Without the latter in a tolerable degree, it must be very imperfect.

“Remember, however, that infallibility is not the property of man, or you may entail disappointment on yourself, by expecting what is never to be found. The best men are sometimes inconsistent with themselves. They are liable to be hurried, by sudden starts of passion, into expressions and actions, which their *cooler* reason will condemn. They may have some oddities of behavior, and some peculiarities of temper. They may be subject to accidental ill-humour, or to whimsical complaints. Blemishes of this kind often shade the brightest character ; but they are never destructive of mutual felicity, unless when they are made so by improper resentment, or by an ill-judged opposition. When cooled, and in his usual temper, the man of understanding, if he has been wrong, will suggest to himself all that could be urged against him. The man of good-nature will, unupbraided, own his error. Immediate contradiction is, therefore, wholly unserviceable, and highly imprudent ; an after repetition is equally unnecessary and injudicious. Any peculiarities in the temper or behavior ought to be properly represented in the tenderest and in the most friendly manner. If the representation of them is made discreetly, it will generally be well taken. But, if they are so habitual as not easily to be altered, strike not too often upon the unharmonious string. Ra-

ther let them pass as unobserved. Such a cheerful compliance will better cement your union ; and they may be made easy to yourself, by reflecting on the superior good qualities by which these trifling faults are so greatly overbalanced.

“ You must remember, my dear, these rules are laid down on the supposition of your being united to a person who possesses the three qualifications for happiness before mentioned. In this case no farther direction is necessary, but that you strictly perform the duty of a wife, namely, to love, to honor, and obey. The two first articles are a tribute so indispensably due to *merit*, that they must be paid by *inclination*—and they naturally lead to the performance of the last, which will not only be an easy, but a pleasing task, since nothing can ever be enjoined by such a person that is in itself improper, and a few things will, that can with any reason, be disagreeable to you.

“ The being united to a man of irreligious principles, makes it impossible to discharge a great part of the proper duty of a wife. To name but one instance, obedience will be rendered impracticable, by frequent injunctions inconsistent with, and contrary to, the higher obligations of morality. This is not a supposition, but is a certainty founded upon facts, which I have too often seen and can attest. Where this happens, the reasons for non-compliance ought to be offered in a plain, strong, good-natured manner. There is at least the chance of success from being heard. But should those reasons be rejected, or the hear-

ing them refused, and silence on the subject enjoined, which is most probable, few people caring to hear what they know to be right, when they are determined not to be convinced by it—obey the injunction, and urge not the argument farther. • Keep, however, steady to your principles, and suffer neither persuasion nor threats to prevail on you to act contrary to them. All commands repugnant to the laws of christianity, it is your indispensable duty to disobey. All requests that are inconsistent with prudence, or incompatible with the rank and character which you ought to maintain in life, it is your interest to refuse. A compliance with the former would be criminal, a consent to the latter highly indiscreet; and it might thereby subject you to general censure. For a man, capable of requiring, from his wife, what he knows to be in itself wrong, is equally capable of throwing the whole blame of such misconduct on her, and of afterwards upbraiding her for a behaviour, to which he will, upon the same principle, disown that he has been accessory. Many similar instances have come within the compass of my own observation. In things of a less material nature, that are neither criminal in themselves, nor pernicious in their consequences, always acquiesce, if insisted on, however disagreeable they may be to your own temper and inclination. Such a compliance will evidently prove, that your refusal, in the other cases, proceeds not from a spirit of contradiction, but merely from a just regard to that superior duty which can never be infringed with impunity.

“As the want of understanding is by no art to be concealed, by no address to be disguised, it might be supposed impossible for a woman of sense to unite herself to a person whose defect, in this instance, must render that sort of rational society, which constitutes the chief happiness of such an union, impossible. Yet here, how often has the weakness of female judgment been conspicuous! The advantages of great superiority in rank or fortune have frequently proved so irresistible a temptation, as, in opinion, to outweigh, not only the folly, but even the vices of its possessor—a grand mistake, even tacitly acknowledged by a subsequent repentance, when the expected pleasures of affluence, equipage, and all the glittering pomp of useless pageantry, have been experimentally found insufficient to make amends for the want of that constant satisfaction which results from the social joy of conversing with a reasonable friend!

“But however weak this motive must be acknowledged, it is more excusable than another, which, I fear, has sometimes had an equal influence on the mind—I mean so great a love of sway, as to induce her to give the preference to a person of weak intellectuals, in hopes of holding, uncontrouled, the reins of government. The expectation is, in fact, ill-grounded. Obstinacy and pride are generally the companions of folly. The silliest people are often the most tenacious of their opinions, and, consequently, the hardest of all others to be managed. But, admit the contrary, the principle is in itself bad. It tends

to invert the order of nature, and to counteract the design of Providence.

“A woman can never be seen in a more ridiculous light than when she appears to govern her husband. If, unfortunately, the superiority of understanding is on her side, the apparent consciousness of that superiority betrays a weakness, that renders her contemptible in the sight of every considerate person, and it may, very probably, fix in his mind a dislike never to be eradicated. In such a case, if it should ever be your own, remember that some degree of dissimulation is commendable, so far as to let your husband's defects appear unobserved. When he judges wrong, never flatly contradict, but lead him insensibly into another opinion, in so discreet a manner, that it may seem entirely his own, and let the whole credit of every prudent determination rest on him, without indulging the foolish vanity of claiming any merit to yourself. Thus a person of but an indifferent capacity, may be so assisted, as, in many instances, to shine with borrowed lustre, scarce distinguishable from the native, and by degrees he may be brought into a kind of mechanical method of acting properly, in all the common occurrences of life. Odd as this position may seem, it is founded in fact. I have seen the method successfully practised by more than one person, where a weak mind, on the governed side, has been so prudently set off as to appear the sole director; like the statute of the Delphic god, which was thought to give forth its own oracles, whilst the humble

priest, who lent his voice, was by the shrine concealed, nor sought a higher glory than a supposed obedience to the power he would be thought to serve."

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## CHAPTER LII.

### *Mrs. Piozzi's Advice to a New Married Man.*

I RECEIVED the news of your marriage with infinite delight, and hope that the sincerity with which I wish you happiness, may excuse the liberty I take in giving you a few rules, whereby more certainly to obtain it.— I see you smile at my wrong-headed kindness, and, reflecting on the charms of your bride, cry out in a rapture, that you are happy enough without my rules. I know you are. But after one of the forty years, which I hope you will pass pleasingly together, are over, this letter may come in turn, and rules for felicity may not be found unnecessary, however some of them may appear impracticable.

Could that kind of love be kept alive thro' the marriage state, which makes the charm of a single one, the sovereign good would no longer be sought for; in the union of two faithful lovers it would be found: but reason shews us that this is impossible, and experience informs us that it never was so; we must preserve it as long, and supply it as happily as we can. When your present violence of passion subsides, however, and a

more cool and tranquil affection takes its place, be not hasty to censure yourself as indifferent, or to lament yourself as unhappy; you have lost that only which it was impossible to retain, and it were graceless amid the pleasures of a prosperous summer to regret the blossoms of a transient spring. Neither unwarily condemn your bride's insipidity till you have recollected that no object however sublime, no sounds however charming, can continue to transport us with delight when they no longer strike us with novelty. The skill to renovate the powers of pleasing, are said, indeed, to be possessed by some women in an eminent degree; but the artifices of maturity are seldom seen to adorn the innocence of youth: you have made your choice, and ought to approve it.

Satiety follows quickly upon the heels of possession; and to be happy, we must always have something in view. The person of your lady is already all your own, and will not grow more pleasing in your eyes I doubt, though the rest of your sex will think her handsome for these dozen of years.— Turn, therefore, all your attention to her mind, which will daily grow brighter by polishing. Study some easy science together, and acquire a similarity of tastes while you enjoy a community of pleasures. You will by this means have many images in common, and be freed from the necessity of separating to find amusement. Nothing is so dangerous to wedded love as the possibility of either being happy out of the company of the



other: endeavour therefore to cement the present intimacy on every side; let your wife never be kept ignorant of your income, your expenses, your friendships or aversions; let her know your very faults, but make them amiable by your virtues; consider all concealment as a breach of fidelity; let her never have any thing to find out in your character; and remember that from the moment one of the partners turns spy upon the other, they have commenced a state of hostility.

Seek not for happiness in singularity; and dread a refinement of wisdom as a deviation into folly. Listen not to those sages who advise you always to scorn the council of a woman, and if you comply with her requests pronounce you to be wife-ridden. Think not any privation, except of positive evil, an excellence, and do not congratulate yourself that your wife is not a learned lady, that she never touches a card, or is wholly ignorant how to make a pudding. Cards, cookery and learning, are all good in their places, and may be all used with advantage.

With regard to expense, I can only observe, that the money laid out in the purchase of distinction is seldom or ever profitably employed. We live in an age when splendid furniture and glittering equipage are grown too common to catch the notice of the meanest spectator; and for the greater ones, they only regard our wasteful folly with silent contempt, or open indignation. This may perhaps be a displeasing reflection, but the following consideration ought to make amends.

The age we live in pays, I think, peculiar attention to the higher distinctions of wit, knowledge and virtue, to which we may more safely, more cheaply, and more honourably aspire. The giddy flirt of quality frets at the respect she sees paid to Lady Edgecombe, and the gay dunce sits pining for a partner, while Jones the orientalist leads up the ball.

I said that the person of your lady would not grow more pleasing to you; but pray let her never suspect that it grows less so: that a woman will pardon an affront to her understanding much sooner than one to her person, is well known; nor will any of us contradict the assertion. All our attainments, all our arts, are employed to gain and keep the heart of man: and what mortification can exceed the disappointment, if the end be not obtained? There is no reproof however pointed, no punishment however severe, that a woman of spirit will not prefer to neglect; and if she can endure it without complaint, it only proves that she means to make herself amends by the attention of others for the slights of her husband. For this, and for every reason, it behoves a married man not to let his politeness fail, though his ardour may abate, but to retain at least that general civility towards his own lady which he is so willing to pay to every other, and not shew a wife of eighteen or twenty years old, that every man in company can treat her with more complaisance than he, who so often vowed to her eternal fondness.

It is not my opinion that a young woman should be indulged in every wild wish of her gay heart or giddy head ; but contradiction may be softened by domestic kindness, and quiet pleasures substituted in the place of noisy ones. Public amusements are not indeed so expensive as is sometimes imagined, but they tend to alienate the minds of married people from each other. A well chosen society of friends and acquaintance, more eminent for virtue and good sense than for gaiety and splendour, where the conversation of the day may afford comment for the evening, seems the most rational pleasure this great town can afford.

That your own superiority should always be seen, but never felt, seems an excellent general rule. A wife should outshine her husband in nothing, not even in dress. If she happens to have a taste for the trifling distinction that finery can confer, suffer her not for a moment to fancy, when she appears in public, that Sir Edward or the Colonel are finer gentlemen than her husband. The bane of married happiness among the city men in general has been, that finding themselves unfit for polite life, they transferred their vanity to their ladies, dressed them up gaily, and sent them out a gallanting, while the good man was to regale with port wine or rum punch, perhaps among mean companions, after the counting house was shut : this practice produced the ridicule thrown on them in all our comedies and novels since commerce began to prosper. But now that I am so near the

subject, a word or two on jealousy may not be amiss; for though not a failing of the present age's growth, yet the seeds of it are too certainly sown in every warm bosom for us to neglect it as a fault of no consequence. If you are ever tempted to be jealous, watch your wife narrowly—but never tease her; tell her your jealousy, but conceal your suspicion; let her, in short, be satisfied that it is only your odd temper, and even troublesome attachment, that makes you follow her; but let her not dream that you ever doubted seriously of her virtue even for a moment. If she is disposed towards jealousy of you, let me beseech you to be always explicit with her and never mysterious: be above delighting in her pain, of all things—nor do your business nor pay your visits with an air of concealment, when all you are doing might as well be proclaimed perhaps in the parish vestry. But I hope better than this of your tenderness and of your virtue, and will release you from a lecture you have so little need of, unless your extreme youth and my uncommon regard will excuse it. And now farewell; make my kindest compliments to your wife, and be happy in proportion as happiness is wished you by, Dear Sir, &c.

## CHAPTER LIII.

*Garrick's Advice to Married Ladies.*

YE fair married dames who so often deplore  
That a lover once blest is a lover no more ;  
Attend to my counsel, nor blush to be taught,  
That prudence must cherish what beauty has  
caught.

The bloom of your cheek, and the glance of  
your eye,  
Your roses and lilies may make the men sigh;  
But roses, and lilies, and sighs pass away,  
And passion will die as your beauties decay.

Use the man that you wed like your fav'rite  
guitar,  
Tho' music in both, they are both apt to jar ;  
How tuneful and soft from a delicate touch,  
Not handled too roughly, nor play'd on too  
much !

The sparrow and linnet will feed from your  
hand,  
Grow tame by your kindness, and come at  
command :  
Exert with your husband the same happy  
skill,  
For hearts, like your birds, may be tamed to  
your will.

Be gay and good-humour'd, complying and  
kind,  
Turn the chief of your care from your face  
to your mind ;

'Tis thus that a wife may her conquests improve,  
And Hymen shall rivet the fetters of love.

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## CHAPTER LIV.

### *On Widowhood.*

THE history of all antiquity gives the strongest reasons to suspect, that widows were often the prey of the lawless tyrant, who spoiled them with impunity because they had none to help them. In many places of scripture we frequently find the state of the widow and the fatherless depicted as of all others the most forlorn and miserable; and men of honour and probity, in enumerating their own good actions, placing a principal share of them in not having spoiled the widow and the fatherless. "If I have lift up my hand against the fatherless," says Job, "or have caused the eyes of the widow to fail, then let mine arm fall from mine shoulder, and be broken from the bone." In the book of Exodus it is declared as a law, that "ye shall not afflict the widow, or the fatherless child. If thou afflict them in any ways, and they cry unto me, I will surely hear their cry; and my wrath shall wax hot, and I will kill you with the sword, and your wives shall be widows, and your children fatherless."

In the eighth century, one of the canon laws enacted that none shall presume to disturb widows, orphans and weak people; and

no sentence could be executed against a widow, without advising the bishop of the diocese of it. These circumstances create a strong suspicion that widows were often oppressed; otherwise, why so many laws for their particular protection?

Among many of the ancients, widows were, by custom, restricted from having a second husband. Almost over all the East, and among many tribes of the Tartars, they believed that wives were not only destined to serve their husbands in this world, but in the next also; and as every wife there was to be the sole property of her first husband, she could never obtain a second, because he could only secure to himself her service in this life.

When the Greeks became sensible of the benefits arising from the regulations of Cecrops concerning matrimony, they conceived so high an idea of them, that they affixed a degree of infamy on the woman who married a second husband, even after the death of the first; and it was more than two centuries after the time of Cecrops before any woman dared to make the attempt. Their history has transmitted to posterity, with some degree of infamy, the name of her who first ventured on a second marriage. Gorgophona, the daughter of Perseus and Andromeda, began the practice; a practice which, though soon after followed by others, could not, even by the multitude of its votaries, be screened from the public odium. During a great part of the heroic ages, widows who married again, were

considered as having offended against public decency. To this custom Virgil plainly alludes, when he describes the conflict in the breast of Dido, between her love for Æneas, and fear of wounding her honour by a second marriage. Nay, so scrupulous were the Greeks about second marriages, that in some circumstances even men were with difficulty allowed to enter into them. Charonidas excluded all those from the public councils of the state, who had children, and married a second wife. "It is impossible, (said he) that a man can advise well for his country, who does not consult the good of his own family. He, whose first marriage has been happy, ought to rest satisfied with that happiness; if unhappy, he must be out of his senses to risque being so again."

The Romans borrowed this custom of the Greeks, and considered it not only as a kind of breach of the matrimonial vow in the woman, but also as affecting the man nearly in the same manner that her infidelity would have affected him while he was living. "The soul of a deceased husband," says Justinian, "is disturbed when his wife marries a second."

In Cumanna, when a husband dies, it is said they make the widow swear, that she will preserve and keep by her his head during her life. This is intended as a monitor, to tell her that she is never to enter again into the married state.

Among the ancient Jews and Christians of the primitive ages, there were certain orders



of men, who were not allowed to join themselves in marriage with widows. "A priest, (says Moses) shall not take to wife a widow, or a divorced woman, or prophane, or an harlot; but he shall take a virgin of his own people to wife."

Pope Syricus, copying the example set by Moses, ordained that if a bishop married a widow, he should be degraded. In the year 400, we find it decreed in the Cyprian council, that if a reader married a widow, he should never be preferred in the church; and that if a subdeacon did the same, he should be degraded to a door-keeper or reader.

In the doomsday book, we find the king exacted only a fine of ten shillings for liberty to marry a maiden; but it cost twenty to obtain liberty of marrying a widow.

Several legislators have fixed a certain time, within which widows should not be allowed to marry. Among the Romans this was ten months. Among other nations it varied according to the regard they thought due to a deceased husband; and the expression of that regard which ought to be shown by his wife.

In the eleventh century the church decreed, that a widow should not marry within the space of one year after her release from the bonds of matrimony. The laws of Geneva shorten this period to half a year. But as there are few countries, in which the matter is taken up by the legislature, it is more commonly regulated by custom than by law.

About a century ago, widows in Scotland,

and in Spain, wore the dress of mourners till death, or a second husband put an end to the ceremony. In Spain the widow passed the first year of her mourning in a chamber hung with black, into which day-light was never suffered to enter. She then changed her dark and dismal scene for a chamber hung with grey, into which she sometimes admitted an intrusive sunbeam to penetrate. In neither of these apartments did custom allow her look-glasses, nor plate, nor any thing but the most plain and necessary furniture. Nor was she to have any jewels on her person, nor to wear any colour but black.

We are so much accustomed in Europe to see mourners dressed in black, that we have affixed a melancholy idea to that colour. Black is not, however, universally appropriated to this purpose. The dress of Chinese mourners is white; that of the Turks blue; of the Peruvians a mouse-colour; of the Egyptians yellow, and in some of there provinces, green. Purple is at present made use of as the mourning dress of kings and cardinals.

Some tribes of American savages allot a widow the tedious space of four years to chastity and to mourning. To this mourning and continency are added particular austerities. Every evening and morning, during the first year, a widow is obliged to lament her loss in loud lugubrious strains. But, if her husband was a war-chief, she is then, during the first moon, to sit the whole day under his war-pole, and there incessantly to bewail her lost

lord, without any shelter from the heat, the cold, or whatever weather shall happen.

This war-pole is a tree stuck in the ground, with the top and branches cut off. It is painted red, and all the weapons and trophies of war, which belonged to the deceased, are hung on it, and remain there till they rot.

In several parts of Africa, a country of tyranny and despotism, women are not only doomed to be the slaves of their husbands in this world, but according to their opinion, in the next also. The husband is no sooner dead, than his wives, concubines, servants, and even sometimes horses, must be strangled, in order to render him the same services in a future life which they did in this.

At the Cape of Good Hope, in order that widows may not impose themselves on the men for virgins, they are obliged by law to cut off a joint from the finger for every husband that dies. This joint they present to their new husband on the day of their marriage.

The Hindoos do not bury their dead after the manner of many other nations, but burn their bodies upon a large pile of wood erected for the purpose. Upon this pile the most beloved wife, and in some places, it is said, all the wives of great men are obliged to devote themselves to the flames which consume the bodies of their husbands.

In the history of the Buccaneers of America, it is said, that a widow in the Carribee Islands is obliged every day, for the space of one year, to carry victuals to the grave of her deceased husband; and the year being ex-

pired, she must dig up his bones, wash and dry them in the sun, put them in a satchel, carry them on her back all day, and sleep upon them all night, for the space of another year. Cruel custom ! if it really exists. But the anonymous author of the history abounds so much in the marvellous, that he deserves but little credit.

Herodotus informs us, that among the ancient Cretonians, a people of Trace, widows, assisted by all their relations, made interest who should be preferred to the honour of being killed on the grave of the deceased husband.

In China, if widows have had children, they become absolute mistresses of themselves, and their relations have no power to compel them to become widows, nor to give them to another husband. It is not, however, reputable for a widow who has children, to enter into a second marriage, without great necessity, especially if she is a woman of distinction. In this case, although she has been a wife only a few hours, or barely contracted, she frequently thinks herself obliged to pass the rest of her days in widowhood—and thereby to testify to the world the esteem and veneration she had for her husband or lover.

In the middle stations of life, the relations of some deceased husbands, eager to reimburse the family in the sum which the wife originally cost it, oblige her to marry, or rather sell her to another husband, if she has no male issue. Sometimes, indeed, it happens that the future husband has concluded the bargain, and paid the money for her, before she

is acquainted with the transaction. By the laws of China, a widow cannot be sold to another husband, till the time of her mourning for the first expires. So desirous, however, are the friends often to dispose of her, that they pay no regard to this law; but, on a complaint being made to a Mandarin, he is obliged to do her justice. As she is commonly unwilling to be bartered for in this manner, without her consent or knowledge, as soon as the bargain is struck, a covered chair, with a considerable number of lusty fellows, is bro't to her house. Being forcibly put into this chair she is conveyed to the house of her new husband, who takes care to secure her.

In Europe, a widow in tolerable circumstances is more mistress of herself than any other woman; being free from that guardianship and controul to which the sex are subject while virgins, and while wives. In no part of Europe is this more exemplified than at Parma, and some other places of Italy; where a widow is the only female who is at liberty either to choose a husband, or assume the government of any of her actions. Should a virgin pretend to choose for herself, it would be reckoned the most profligate licentiousness. Should she govern her actions or opinions, she would be considered as the most pert, and perhaps the most abandoned, of her sex.

Politeness and humanity have joined their efforts in Europe to render the condition of widows comfortable. The government of England has provided a fund for the widows of officers. The clergy of Scotland have vo-

luntarily raised a stock to support the widows of their order. Many incorporated trades have followed these laudable examples. This case is not confined to Britain. It extends to France, Germany, and other countries, where it exists in forms too various to be delineated.

The ancient laws of a great part of Europe ordained, that a widow should lose her dower, if she married again, or suffered her chastity to be corrupted. The laws of Prussia retain this ordinance to the present time. They likewise ordain that a widow shall not marry again, within nine months after the death of her husband.

The Prussians have another regulation concerning widows, highly descriptive of the humanity and wisdom of their legislature. When a widower and widow intend to marry, one or both of which having children, as it too frequently happens that such children are either despised or neglected, in consequence of the new connections formed, and perhaps of the new offspring raised up, the laws of Prussia provide for their education and fortune, according to the rank and circumstances of the parents ; and will not suffer either man or woman to enter into a second marriage, without previously settling with the children of the first.

## CHAPTER LV.

*Dr. Schomberg's Method of Reading, for  
Female Improvement.*

IN A LETTER TO A LADY.

MADAM,

CONFORMABLE to your desire, and my promise, I present you with a few thoughts on the method of reading ; which you would have had sooner, only that you gave me leave to set them down at my leisure hours. I have complied with your request in both these particulars ; so that you see, Madam, how absolute your commands are over me. If my remarks should answer your expectations, and the purpose for which they were intended ; if they should in the least conduce to the spending your time in a more profitable and agreeable manner than most of your sex generally do, it will give me a pleasure equal at least to that you will receive.

It were to be wished that the female part of the human creation, on whom nature has poured out so many charms with so lavish a hand, would pay some regard to the cultivating of their minds and improving their understanding. It is easily accomplished. Would they bestow a fourth part of the time they throw away on the trifles and gewgaws of dress, in reading proper books, it would perfectly answer their purpose. Not that I am against the ladies adorning their persons ;

let them be set off with all the ornaments that art and nature can conspire to produce for their embellishment, but let it be with reason and good sense, not caprice and humor ; for there is good sense in dress, as in all things else. Strange doctrine to some ! But I am sure, Madam, you know there is—you practise it.

The first rule to be laid down to any one who reads to improve, is never to read but with attention. As the abstruse parts of learning are not necessary to the accomplishment of one of your sex, a small degree of it will suffice. I would throw the subjects of which the ladies ought not to be wholly ignorant under the following heads :

#### HISTORY.—MORALITY.—POETRY.

The first employs the memory ; the second, the judgment ; and the third, the imagination.

Whenever you undertake to read History, make a small abstract of the memorable events ; and set down in what year they happened. If you entertain yourself with the life of a famous person, do the same by his most remarkable actions, with the addition of the year and the place he was born at and died. You will find these great helps to your memory, as they will lead you to remember what you do not write down, by a sort of chain that links the whole history together.

Books on Morality deserve an exact reading. There are none in our language more useful and entertaining than the Spectators, Tatlers, and Guardians. They are the stand-



ards of the English tongue, and as such should be read over and over again ; for as we imperceptibly slide into the manners and habits of those persons with whom we most frequently converse, so reading being, as it were, a silent conversation, we insensibly write and talk in the style of the authors we have the most often read, and who have left the deepest impressions on our mind. Now, in order to retain what you read on the various subjects that fall under the head of morality, I would advise you to mark with a pencil whatever you find worth remembering. If a passage strike you, mark it down in the margin ; if an expression, draw a line under it ; if a whole paper in the fore-mentioned books, or any others which are written in the same loose and unconnected manner, make an asterisk over the first line. By these means you will select the most valuable, and they will sink deeper in your memory than the rest, on repeated reading, by being distinguished from them.

The last article is Poetry. The way of distinguishing good poetry from bad, is to turn it out of verse into prose, and see whether the thought is natural, and the words adapted to it ; or whether they are not too big and sounding, or too low and mean for the sense they would convey. This rule will prevent you from being imposed on by bombast and fustian, which with many passes for sublime ; for smooth verses which run off the ear with an easy cadence, and harmonious turn, very often impose nonsense on the world, and are

like your fine dressed beaux, who pass for fine gentlemen. Divest both from their outward ornaments, and people are surprised they could have been so easily deluded.

I have now, madam, given a few rules, and those such only as are really necessary. I could have added more; but these will be sufficient to enable you to read without burdening your memory, and yet with another view besides that of barely killing time, as too many are accustomed to do.

The task you have imposed on me, is a strong proof of your knowing the true value of time, and always having improved it to the best advantage, were there no other; and that there are other proofs, those who have the pleasure of being acquainted with you, can tell.

As for my part, Madam, you have done me too much honor, by singling me out from all your acquaintance on this occasion, to say any thing that would not look like flattery; you yourself would think it so, were I to do you the common justice all your friends allow you: I must therefore be silent on this head, and only say, that I shall think myself well rewarded in turn, if you will believe me to be, with the utmost sincerity, as I really am,

Madam,

Your faithful

Humble servant,

I. SCHOMBERG.

## CHAPTER LVI.

*The Deaths of Lucretia and Virginia.*

THE force of prejudice appears in nothing more strongly than in the encomiums which have been lavished upon Lucretia, for laying violent hands upon herself, and Virginius, for killing his own daughter. These actions seem to derive all their glory from the revolutions to which they give rise, as the former occasioned the abolition of monarchy amongst the Romans, and the latter put an end to the arbitrary power of the decemviri. But if we lay aside our prepossessions for antiquity, and examine these actions without prejudice, we cannot but acknowledge, that they are rather the effects of human weakness and obstinacy than of resolution and magnanimity. Lucretia, for fear of worldly censure, chose rather to submit to the lewd desires of Tarquin, than have it thought that she had been stabbed in the embraces of a slave; which sufficiently proves, that all her boasted virtue was founded upon vanity, and too high a value for the opinion of mankind. The younger Pliny, with great reason, prefers to this famed action that of a woman of low-birth, whose husband being seized with an incurable disorder, chose rather to perish with him than survive him. The action of Arria is likewise much more noble, whose husband Pætus, being condemned to death, plunged a dagger in her breast, and told him, with a dying voice, "Pætus,

it is not painful." But the death of Lucretia gave rise to a revolution, and it therefore became illustrious ; though, as St. Augustine justly observes, it is only an instance of the weakness of a woman, too solicitous about the opinion of the world.

Virginius, in killing his daughter, to preserve her from falling a victim to the lust of the decemvir Claudius, was guilty of the highest rashness ; since he might certainly have gained the people, already irritated against the tyrant, without embruing his hands in his own blood. This action may indeed be extenuated, as Virginius slew his daughter from a false principle of honour, and did it to preserve her from what both he and she thought worse than death ; namely, to preserve her from violation : but though it may in some measure be excused, it should not certainly be praised or admired.

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## CHAPTER LVII.

### *Thoughts on the Education of Women.*

BY AN ANONYMOUS AUTHOR.

THE education of men, and that of women, ought to be conducted on the same principles, so far as it relates to the vanity of both being directed to essential objects. In almost every other respect, however, there should be a difference. One thing in particular is to be cautiously avoided in the latter, that is, raising

the imagination, or suffering them to do any thing from passion.

Born for a life of uniformity and dependence, what they have occasion for is reason, sweetness, and sensibility, resources against idleness and languor, moderate desires, and no passions.

Were it in your power to give them genius, it would be almost always a useless, and very often a dangerous present. It would, in general, make them regret the station which Providence has assigned them, or have recourse to unjustifiable ways to get from it. The best taste for science only contributes to make them particular. It takes them away from the simplicity of their domestic duties, and from general society, of which they are the loveliest ornament.

Intended to be at the head of a house, to bring up children, to depend on a master, who will occasionally want their obedience and advice, their chief qualifications are to be the love of order, patience, prudence and right-mindedness.

The more agreeable talents they can connect with these cardinal virtues—the more parts of learning they have tasted the elements of, so as not to be entirely shut out of mixed conversation—the more relish they have for proper and well chosen books—and the more they are capable of reflecting, the better and happier beings they will be.

Rousseau says, that the little cunning natural to women ought not to be checked, because they will want it to captivate the men,

on whom they depend. This is a detestable maxim. He might as well have recommended dissimulation, and even open falsehood; for, detestable as they are, they may likewise, at times, serve a turn. But for one case, in which vice may be useful, there are a thousand in which it does harm. Nor is there any thing that will weather every storm, save the habitual exercise of virtue. Besides, if there were any vices, which it became a philosopher to recommend, surely they should not be the lowest of all—those which indicate the last degree of corruption, both in body and mind—those of which immediate self-interest is the object.

After all, an artful woman may govern a weak and narrow-minded man; but she will never gain the esteem and attachment of a man of sense.

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## CHAPTER LVIII.

*Wedded Love is infinitely preferable to Variety.*

HAIL, wedded Love, mysterious law,  
true source  
Of human offspring, sole propriety,  
In Paradise of all things common else!

By thee adult'rous lust was driven from  
men,  
Among the bestial herds to range; by thee  
Founded in reason, loyal, just and pure,

Relations dear, and all the charities  
Of father, son and brother, first were known.

Thou art the fountain of domestic sweets,  
Whose bed is undefil'd and chaste pronounc'd.  
Here Love his golden shafts employs, here  
lights

His constant lamp, and waves his purple  
wings,

Reigns here and revels; not in the bought  
smile

Of harlots, loveless, joyless, unendear'd,

Casual fruition; nor in court amours,

Mixed dance, or wanton mask, or midnight  
ball,

Or serenade, which the starved lover sings

To his proud fair, best quitted with disdain.

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## CHAPTER LIX.

*On the Revolutions of the French fashions.  
with some Advice to the Ladies respecting  
certain parts of Dress.*

[TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH.]

FASHION is to custom what prejudices are to the moral virtues. It imperiously dictates laws to those who live under its empire, and its decrees are irrevocable. Women, that bewitching part of the creation, born for the happiness of one half of our sex, and for the torment of the other, discontented with the little that the laws have done for them in the distribution of direct power, have at all times sought to acquire by address, what

they could not reasonably hope to obtain by open force. The auxiliary means which they have always employed to accomplish their ends are those of the toilette; but in blindly suffering themselves to be guided by custom, and adopting new modes, without choice and without reflection, the fair sex do not derive from those trifles, to which they annex so much value, all the advantages they expect. Those whom their rank or chance has placed in a conspicuous station, generally give an example to others. They are the first to adopt fashions, and often take them from some remote source, to which people of ordinary rank never would have gone to look for them.

The grand fault in what concerns the toilette, and that against which they ought to be greatly on their guard, is not to give too much into general fashion, and not to believe that because a particular dress becomes one woman, it will become all in the like manner. To destroy this prejudice, it will be sufficient to observe, that ornaments employed in dress, ought to be varied in their composition, and to be suited to the shape and figure of those who adopt them. Though one cannot form general principles upon this subject, yet after having taken a view of the modes of preceding ages, I shall venture to make a few cursory observations upon the fashions which prevail at present.

It is with disgust that the imagination returns to those remote ages, when nature, insulted in every respect, and disfigured by the



most whimsical dresses, presented to the sight only hideous figures. In the first ages of the French monarchy, the dress of the men varied more than that of the women. Their clothes were alternately either too long or too short. In general, long vestments are more becoming and more noble than those that are short. It is a great pity that this custom should be attended with so many inconveniences, and that it should absolutely impede the exercise of the body, and those labours which our wants require, and which luxury commands.

Under Philip the Fair, an epocha when dress began to emerge from barbarity, long coats only were worn by men in any consideration. In the army, however, as well as in the country, short coats were always retained. In the fourteenth century, the same dress was worn by men and women. Under the reigns of Charles V. and Charles VI. long coats only were in fashion; but Charles VII. who had ill made legs, again introduced long coats.\*

Nothing is more curious, and at the same time ridiculous, than the dress of people of fashion during the first years of the reign of Louis XI. Figure to yourself a *petit maitre*, with his hair flat and bushy, dressed in a doublet shaped like an under waistcoat, which scarcely covered his reins; his breeches

\* May not this circumstance, as well as many others that might be mentioned, serve to prove the justness of the proverb, which says, that *wise people invent fashions, and fools follow them?*

exceedingly close, rising very high, and his middle bound round with ribbands, in a most whimsical manner, as may be still seen in some ancient paintings; add to all this, artificial shoulders, in form of a cushion, which were placed upon each shoulder-blade, to make him appear to have a large chest, and to give him a robust and vigorous appearance. This strange caricatura was terminated by shoes, the points of which, for people of the first quality, were full two feet in length.—The populace had them only of six inches: those were what they called shoes *a la poulaine*. They were invented by Henry Plantagenet, duke of Anjou, to conceal a very large excrescence which he had upon one of his feet. As this prince, the most gallant and beautiful man of his age, gave the lead to the court, every one was desirous of having shoes like his. Hence comes the origin of the French proverb *etre sur un grand pied*.—Under Francis I. and his successors, the form of men's dress began to approach perfection; but under the good Henry IV. it became preferable to that which we have since adopted, and which still subsists. The most useful of all modes, and that which will survive all others, though it has found many enemies in France, is the peruke. Ecclesiastics were long forbidden to wear one in church. In 1685, a canon of the cathedral of Beauvais was prevented from celebrating mass, because he wore a peruke. He, however, deposited it in the hands of two notaries, at the entrance into the choir, and pro-

tested against the violence offered him. In 1689, several Oratorians\* were dismissed from their order, because they had put on perukes. At that time they were very large; but at present every thing is so much changed, that even physicians, who formerly considered an enormous peruke as the basis of their reputation, seem to disdain that ornament. Several have adopted the bag, and perhaps we shall soon see them performing their morning visits with a long queue.

When bags began first to be in fashion, people never wore them except when in dishabille; in visits of ceremony one could not appear but with the hair tied in a ribband, and floating over the shoulders. This is absolutely contrary to our present fashion.

In the early periods of the monarchy, the ladies scarcely paid any attention to dress.—It would appear that they thought of nothing more than pleasing their husbands, and of giving a proper education to their children, and that the rest of their time was employed in family concerns, and rural economy. If their dress was subject to little change in those primitive times, we ought not to be astonished to see the fair sex indemnify themselves at present for their long inaction.—Their dress, however, has experienced the same revolutions as that of men. There was a time when their robes rose so high, that they absolutely covered the breast; but under

\* A Congregation of priests instituted in France, by Cardinal de Berulle, and approved by the Pope in 1613.

Charles VI. Queen Isabella of Bavaria, as remarkable for her gallantry as her beauty, brought back the fashion of leaving the shoulders and part of the neck uncovered.

Let us hear what *Juvenal des Ursins* says respecting the manner in which the women dressed their heads. "Both married and unmarried ladies were very extravagant in their dress, and wore caps wonderfully high and large, having two great ears at each side, which were of such a magnitude, that when they wished to enter a door, it was impossible for them." About that time, the famous Carmelite, *Thomas Cenare*, exercised his oratorical talents against these caps. His efforts were at first successful; but his triumph was of short duration, and they again rose to a prodigious degree; they however, at length, became entirely out of fashion.

The reign of Charles VII. brought back the use of ear-rings, bracelets and collars.—Some years before the death of that prince, the dress of the ladies was ridiculous in the highest degree. They wore robes so exceedingly long, that several yards of the train dragged behind; the sleeves were so wide that they swept the ground; and their heads were lost under immense bonnets, which were three fourths of their breadth in height. To this whimsical fashion another succeeded, which was no less so. The ladies placed a kind of cushion upon their heads, loaded with ornaments, which displayed the worst taste imaginable. This head dress was so large, that it was two yards in breadth. At that

period it was absolutely necessary to enlarge the doors of all the houses. From this extremity, the fair sex passed to another no less extravagant. They adopted the use of bonnets so exceedingly low, and they arranged the hair in so close a manner, that they appeared as if their heads had been shaven.— On the death of Charles VIII. Anne of Bretagne, his queen, introduced the use of the black veil, which she always wore. The ladies of her court adopted it also, and ornamented it with red and purple fringes; but the cits, improving upon this mode, enriched it with pearls and clasps of gold.

It was under the reign of Francis I. that the women began to turn up their hair.— Margaret, queen of Navarre, frizzed that on the temples, and turned back that before.— This princess occasionally added to this head dress a small bonnet of velvet or satin, ornamented with pearls and jewels, and placed over it a small tuft of feathers. Such a fashion was very becoming, and this perhaps is the first period when the ladies began to dress with any taste. A revolution was absolutely requisite. The gallant and voluptuous reign Catharine de Medicis necessarily brought about a happy change in the French fashions. It was about this time that the *chaperon* or hood appeared. This mode continued a long time, because the sumptuary laws established a distinction in the stuff which composed it. The hoods of ladies of quality were of velvet, and those of citizens, of plain cloth.— *La Bourcier*, midwife to Mary of Medicis,

obtained an express order from the king to wear one of velvet. Of all the sumptuary laws made at different periods, none had so sudden an effect as the edict of Henry the Great in 1604. This monarch, after having forbid his subjects to wear either gold or silver upon their dresses, adds, "except, however, ladies of pleasure and pick-pockets, for whom we are not so far interested as to do them the honor of attending to their conduct." This ordinance was attended with the proper effect, and neither ladies of pleasure, nor pick-pockets took any advantage of their permission.

The French ladies in the present day have made such a rapid progress in the art of setting off their charms, that they are now followed by all the ladies in Europe. We have seen modes of different kinds succeed one another with inconceivable rapidity. Names of all sorts have been exhausted. Four volumes would scarcely contain the nomenclature of all the novelties which the inventive genius of the ladies has devised in the last ten years. But this is not all, the fair sex have so far disfigured nature, that one must look at them very closely not to be mistaken. Their cavalier gait, the black hat, the riding coat and the cane which they have adopted, have given them almost the appearance of men. Such a dress does not at all become them, and we cannot help saying, that it destroys all their graces.

Let us now make a few observations on the advantages and disadvantages of female

dress; and let us begin with the ornaments of the head, which may be called the citadel of coquetry.

As the head dress should be considered only as an accessory part, whenever its height exceeds the length of the face, it produces a disagreeable effect; and its effect will become more sensible in a woman whose physiognomy is small, than in one who has Roman features. The former can derive no advantage but from slight ornaments which do not occupy much space; she must always avoid large figures and straight lines. A head dress which comes too far forward on the head of a woman who has a small nose and flat chin, will render these blemishes more sensible, whilst such a dress will admirably become one who has a prominent chin and a large nose.

Beautiful eyes lose great part of their splendour under large hats worn as they are at present. This head dress ought to be the resource of those ladies who can boast of nothing but a pretty mouth, and an agreeable smile. The colours of gauze and ribbands employed to ornament the head, ought to be suited to that of the hair and complexion.— This care adds much to the graces of nature. It must, however, be allowed, that the ladies understand the harmony of colours much better than the relation of forms.

The advantages of an elegant figure are often lost by the ridiculous folly of wishing to appear very slender. One needs only to study the shape of the superb antique statue of

Venus, to be convinced that the beauty of proportion is hurt as much by too slender and uniform, as by too clumsy a waist. It must be observed also, that too narrow boddices and stays absolutely destroy gracefulness and ease. The motions become stiff, and the attitudes confined; besides speaking of the fatal accidents which may arise from this violence offered to nature.

Depravation of taste in regard to dress was some years ago carried to a great length. Very corpulent women wished to increase their size by cork rumps, which women who were too slender, had ingeniously invented to supply what nature had refused them. We have seen some of a very diminutive size, who by the help of this ridiculous piece of furniture seemed to have acquired as much dimensions in breadth as in height.

Those ornaments which are intended to adorn nature ought to be simple and light. The Grecian ladies, who knew so well how to make the most of their charms, took great care never to use veils but of the most pliable stuffs. These veils yield to their various motions, and added to the natural gracefulness of their persons. All the ancient statues, therefore brought us from that country, which gave birth to the arts, are admired by artists and connoisseurs for a character of lightness and ease which can never be surpassed.

It is wrong to believe, that cold climates should prevent people from wearing thin dresses: by means of furred cloaks, which may be used in the open air, one may wear



an under dress of the lightest stuff possible. The manner in which the Russian ladies dress, may serve as a proof of what we have here advanced ; but a proper medium ought to be observed between dresses which are too clumsy, and those which, on account of their thinness, might give offence to decency. A woman who exposes herself to these inconveniences does not understand her own interest.

It was above all in the arrangement of the hair that the Greek ladies excelled, especially with regard to simplicity. We must allow, that the ladies dress better at present than formerly : and that they are nearer to perfection than they were some years ago. A slight dawning begins already to appear in the manner in which they dress their hair, and there is reason to hope that they will make a very rapid progress in this part of the business of the toilette, especially if they consult nature and good artists.

Nothing is more agreeable and becoming than to wear the hair floating over the shoulders. It is much to be wished that the ladies would adhere to this custom. The curls which they have adopted before, would become them much better, were they less regular, and disposed with more taste.

When by some lucky chance a woman has attained almost to perfection in the art of dressing, that is to say, in the art of knowing what best becomes her, she ought to be very nice in her choice of new fashions. In an age so frivolous as the present, the loss of a lover may be the consequence of even such a tri-

fling circumstance as that of the hat being wrong placed, or turned too much to the right or the left. When a passion is founded only upon trifles, ought we to be surprised that a trifle should destroy it?

Artists, who have spent their lives in studying the beauties of nature, are the best judges in this respect. They alone have the privilege of fixing the public opinion in such matters. This is really their province. The time is perhaps not far distant, when the fair sex, better acquainted with their dearest interests, will invite them to their toilettes, and consider them as the arbiters of taste. Favored then by the graces and by beauty, and envied by all the other classes of men, they will be indemnified with usury for that neglect with which they have so long been treated. But a great revolution must take place before that happy day arrives. At that epocha, every thing will return to its primitive order, and, according to the French proverb, every man will be in his own place, and every abbe in his benefice.

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## CHAPTER LX.

*On looking at the Picture of a beautiful Female.*

WHAT dazzling beauties strike my ravish'd  
eyes,  
And fill my soul with pleasure and surprise!

What blooming sweetness smiles upon that  
face !

How mild, yet how majestic every grace !

In those bright eyes what more than mimic fire

Benignly shines, and kindles gay desire !

Yet chasten'd modesty, fair white-rob'd dame,

Triumphant sits to check the rising flame.

Sure nature made thee her peculiar care :

Was ever form so exquisitely fair ?

Yes, once there was a form thus heav'nly  
bright,

But now 'tis veil'd in everlasting night ;

Each glory which that lovely face could boast,

And every charm, in traceless dust is lost ;

An unregarded heap of ruin lies

That form which lately drew ten thousand  
eyes.

What once was courted, lov'd, ador'd, and  
prais'd,

Now mingles with the dust from whence  
'twas rais'd.

No more soft dimpling smiles those cheeks  
adorn,

Whose rosy tincture sham'd the rising morn ;

No more with sparkling radiance shine those  
eyes,

Nor over those the sable arches rise ;

Nor from those ruby lips soft accents flow,

Nor lillies on the snowy forehead blow ;

All, all are cropp'd by death's impartial hand,

Charms could not bribe, nor beauty's pow'r  
withstand ;

Not all that crowd of wond'rous charms could  
save

The fair possessor from the dreary grave.

How fair is beauty, transient, false and vain !  
It flies with morn, and ne'er returns again.  
Death, cruel ravager, delights to prey  
Upon the young, the lovely and the gay.  
If death appear not, oft corroding pain,  
With pining sickness in her languid train,  
Blights youth's gay spring with some untimely blast,  
And lays the blooming field of beauty waste :  
But should these spare, still time creeps on apace,  
And plucks with wither'd hand each winning grace ;  
The eyes, lips, cheeks, and bosom he disarms,  
No art from him can shield exterior charms.

But would you, fair ones be esteem'd, approv'd,  
And with an everlasting ardor lov'd ;  
Would you in wrinkled age, admirers find,  
In every female virtue dress the mind ;  
Adorn the heart, and teach the soul to charm,  
And when the eyes no more the breast can warm,  
These ever-blooming beauties shall inspire  
Each gen'rous heart with friendship's sacred fire ;  
These charms shall neither wither, fade, nor fly ;  
Pain, sickness, time, and death, they dare defy.  
When the pale tyrant's hand shall seal your doom,  
And lock your ashes in the silent tomb,  
These beauties shall in double lustre rise,  
Shine round the soul, and waft it to the skies.

## CHAPTER LXI.

THE Extracts which follow, are exclusively from  
“ The History of Women, from the earliest Anti-  
quity, to the present time ”— by Dr. Alexander.

*Education of Women in Asia and Africa—  
Amusements of the Grecian Ladies—Re-  
ligious Festivals of the Greeks—Religi-  
ous Dancers, &c.*

IN several of the warmer regions of Asia and Africa, where women are considered merely as instruments of animal pleasure, the little education bestowed upon them, is entirely calculated to debauch their minds and give additional charms to their persons. They are instructed in such graces and alluring arts as tend to inflame the passions; they are taught vocal and instrumental music, which they accompany with dances, in which every movement, and every gesture, is expressively indecent: but they receive no moral instruction; for it would teach them that they were doing wrong: no improvement; for it would shew them that they were degrading themselves, by being only trained up to satisfy the pleasures of sense. This, however, is not the practice of all parts of Asia and Africa: the women of Hindostan are educated more decently; they are not allowed to learn music or dancing; which are only reckoned accomplishments fit for ladies of pleasure: they are, notwithstanding, taught all the personal graces; and particular care is taken to

instruct them in the art of conversing with elegance and vivacity : some of them are also taught to write, and the generality to read, that they may be able to read the Koran ; instead of which, they more frequently dedicate themselves to tales and romances ; which, painted in all the lively imagery of the East, seldom fail to corrupt the minds of creatures shut up from the world, and consequently forming to themselves extravagant and romantic notions of all that is transacted in it.

In well regulated families, women are taught by heart some prayers in Arabic, which at certain hours they assemble in a hall to repeat ; never being allowed the liberty of going to the public mosque. They are enjoined always to wash themselves before praying ; and, indeed, the virtues of cleanliness, of chastity and obedience, are so strongly and constantly inculcated on their minds, that in spite of their general debauchery of manners, there are not a few among them, who, in their common deportment, do credit to the instructions bestowed upon them ; nor is this much to be wondered at, when we consider the tempting recompense that is held out to them ; they are in paradise, to flourish forever, in the vigour of youth and beauty ; and however old or ugly, when they depart this life, are there to be immediately transformed into all that is fair, and all that is graceful.

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AS the Greek ladies were almost constantly employed, and as voluntary employment

often banishes even every wish of pleasure and dissipation, we have reason to believe that they had few, if any, private diversions or amusements; which are generally the offspring of idleness, as appears plainly from the difference, in this respect, between the women and the men; the former, as we have observed, being fully employed, had no need of amusements; the latter being frequently, and, in Sparta, even by law obliged to be constantly idle, were thereby induced to have recourse to games and sports of various kinds to fill up their vacant hours, and prevent that uncomfortable tedium which so constantly attends idleness: to some of these public sports the women were admitted, and from others excluded by the severest penalties.— Their legislator possibly imagined, that should they be indiscriminately admitted to all the amusements of the men, they would acquire an unsuitable boldness, and neglect the several duties and offices required of them at home. To what we have here observed the Spartan women are, however, an objection: we have already seen, that they amused themselves with the masculine exercises of wrestling, throwing darts, &c. But this is not all: they were obliged to appear naked, at some of their solemn feasts and sacrifices, and to dance and sing, while the young men stood in a circle around them; an amusement highly indelicate, or, if a religious ceremony, only worthy of the Cyprian goddess.

ANOTHER cause, which contributed to make the religious festivals of the Greeks appear as amusements and diversions, was that ridiculous buffoonery that constituted so great a part of them : it would be tedious to enumerate one half of these buffooneries ; but let a few serve as a specimen. At a festival held in honor of Bacchus, the women ran about for a long time seeking the god, who, they pretended, had run away from them : this done, they passed their time in proposing riddles and questions to each other, and laughing at such as could not answer them ; and at last often closed the scene with such enormous excesses, that at one of these festivals, the daughters of Minya, having, in their madness, killed Hippasus, had him dressed and served up to table as a rarity.— At another, kept in honour of Venus and Adonis, they beat their breasts, tore their hair, and mimicked all the signs of the most extravagant grief, with which they supposed the goddess to have been effected on the death of her favourite paramour. At another, in honour of the nymph Cotys, they addressed her as the goddess of wantonness with many mysterious rites and ceremonies. At Corinth, these rites and ceremonies, being perhaps thought inconsistent with the character of modest women, this festival was only celebrated by harlots. Athenæus mentions a festival, at which the women laid hold on all the old batchelors they could find, and dragged them round an altar ; beating them all the time with their fists, as punishment for



their neglect of the sex. We shall only mention two more; at one of which, after the assembly had met in the temple of Ceres, the women shut out all the men and dogs, themselves and the bitches remaining in the temple all night: in the morning, the men were let in, and the time was spent in laughing together at the frolic. At the other, in honour of Bacchus, they counterfeited phrenzy and madness; and to make this madness appear the more real, they used to eat the raw and bloody entrails of goats newly slaughtered. And, indeed, the whole of the festivals of Bacchus, a deity much worshipped in Greece, were celebrated with rites either ridiculous, obscene, or madly extravagant. There were others, however, in honor of the other gods and goddesses, which were more decent, and had more the appearance of religious solemnity, though even in these, the women dressed out in all their finery; and adorned with flowers and garlands, either formed splendid processions, or assisted in performing ceremonies, the general tendency of which was to amuse rather than instruct.

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IN the neighbourhood of Surat, the Hindoos have many magnificent temples; and in every temple are a number of Bramins, or priests, dedicated to the service of the god there worshipped. A part of that service consists in dancing on religious assemblies, and other solemn occasions; and these dances are performed by young women, the most

handsome and beautiful in the country.\*— These reside in the temple, and are by the Bramins carefully collected from every place, where their own influence, or the veneration of their temple reaches. In order to induce them to enter into this service, besides the immense rewards held out to them in the world to come, they have some peculiar privileges in this. They may leave the temple when they please; and being accounted holy, they are then eagerly sought after in marriage, and have the precedence in this respect to all other women. While in the temples, they are entirely under the direction of the Bramins; and it is by many supposed, that they are also entirely appropriated to their pleasures; but however this be, they are hardly ever allowed, like the other female dancers of the country, to perform for the amusement of the public.

Besides these religious dancers, there is almost in every large city, companies of dancing girls, called Balliaderes; who, in the manner of our strolling players, go about for the amusement of the public; and who will exhibit their performances at the house of any person, who is able to pay what they demand; or may be seen by any one for a trifle at their public assemblies. These beautiful girls are constantly followed by an old deformed musician, who beats time with a brazen instrument, called a Tom; and continu-

\* When Mamood first took the magnificent temple of Sumnat, he found there five hundred dancing girls, and three hundred musicians.

ally at every stroke repeats the word Tom with such vociferation, that he soon works himself into a kind of phrenzy—the Balliaderes, at the same time eager to please, and intoxicated with the music, and the smell of the essences with which they are perfumed, soon after begin to be in the same state: their dances are in general expressive of the passion of love, and they manage them so as to give, even the most ignorant, tolerable ideas of that passion in all its different situations and circumstances—and so great is their beauty, so voluptuous their figure, so rich and ingeniously contrived their dress, that they seldom perform without drawing together a numerous crowd of spectators.

Strolling female dancers, who live by that profession, are not, however, peculiar to the East Indies; they have of late been met with in Otaheite, and several other places; but beside their strolling dancers in Otaheite, they have a dance called Timoradee, which the young girls perform, when eight or ten of them can be got together; it consists in every motion, gesture, and tone of voice that is truly lascivious; and being brought up to it from their childhood, in every motion, and in every gesture, they keep time with an exactness scarcely excelled by the most expert stage-dancers of Europe. But though this diversion is allowed to the virgin, it is prohibited to the wife; who, from the moment of marriage, must abstain from it forever.

## CHAPTER LXII.

*Punishment of Polygamy in Egypt—Semiramis of Assyria—Account of the Sybarites—Customs of the Grecian Women.*

THE men in Egypt were not allowed to indulge in polygamy, a state which always presupposes women to be slaves. The chastity of virgins was protected by a law of the severest nature; he who committed a rape on a free woman, had his privates cut off, that it might be out of his power ever to perpetrate the like crime, and that others might be terrified by so dreadful a punishment. Concubinage, as well as polygamy, seems either not to have been lawful, or at least not fashionable; it was a liberty, however, in which their kings were sometimes indulged, for we find when Sesostris set out on his expedition to conquer the world, he left the government of the kingdom to his brother, with full power over every thing, except the royal diadem, the queen, and royal concubines. The queens of Egypt are said to have been much honored, as well as more readily obeyed than the kings; and it is also related, that the husbands were in their marriage-contracts obliged to promise obedience to their wives; a thing which in our modern times we are often obliged to perform, though our wives entered into the promise.

WHILE Ninus, king of Assyria, was besieging Bactria, it is said that the attempt would have failed, had it not been for the assistance of Semiramis, then wife of one of his principal officers, who planned a method of attacking the city, with such superior skill, that he soon became master of it. Ninus being attracted by the beauty and art of this virago, soon became passionately fond of her; in the mean time, her husband foreseeing that this passion would end in his destruction, to avoid falling a victim to licentious despotism, privately put an end to his life. The main obstacle being thus removed, Ninus took the adulteress to wife, an action which, according to some authors he had soon reason to repent, for she having first brought over to her interest the principal men of the state, next prevailed on her silly husband to invest her, for the space of five days, with the sovereign power; a decree was accordingly issued, that all the provinces should implicitly obey her during that time; which having obtained, she began the exercise of her sovereignty, by putting to death the too indulgent husband who had conferred it on her, and so securing to herself the kingdom. Other authors have denied that Ninus committed this rash, or Semiramis this execrable deed, but all agree that she succeeded her husband at his death, in whatever manner it happened. Seeing herself at the head of a mighty empire, and struck with the love of magnificence and fame, she proposed to render her name immortal, by performing something that should far surpass all that had been done

by her predecessors ; the scheme she fell upon, was to build in the space of one year, the mighty city of Babylon ; which being finished within the proposed time, greatly exceeded in magnificence any thing in the world had ever seen ; two millions of men are said to have been constantly employed on it, during the time it was erecting.

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THE Sybarites, from the imperfect accounts we have of them, placed the whole of their happiness in indolence, eating, finery, and women. Their bodies were so much relaxed with sloth, and their minds with voluptuousness, that the greatest affront that could be offered to any one, was to call him a Sybarite, an appellation, which comprehended in it almost every human crime, and every human folly. In grottos, cooled with fountains, their youth spent a great part of their time in scenes of debauchery, amid women, either elegantly adorned by art, or sometimes reduced to a state of nature. Women of the first quality, though not disposed of by auction, were treated in a manner somewhat similar ; they were given as a reward to him who, in contending for them, shewed the greatest splendor and magnificence. When any great entertainment was designed, the women, who were to make a part of the company, were invited a year before, that they might have time to appear in all the lustre of beauty and of dress ; a circumstance which plainly proves that they did not, as some other na-

tions, value the sex only as objects of sensual pleasure, but as objects which added elegance to their scenes of magnificence and grandeur ; and perhaps because they excelled the men in softness and effeminacy, qualities upon which they set the greatest value, and cultivated with the utmost assiduity.— These people, after having been for many centuries the contempt of the universe, were at last shamefully driven from their country, and entirely dispersed by the Cratonians.

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**BUT** confinement was not the greatest evil which the Grecian women suffered ; by other customs and laws they were still more oppressed : it was not in their power to do any judicial act without the consent of a tutor or guardian ; and so little power, even over themselves, did the legislature devolve upon women, though ripened by age and experience, that when the father died, the son became the guardian of his own mother. When a woman was cited into court, she was incapable of answering without her guardian ; and therefore the words of the proclamation were, " We cite A. B. and her guardian." In making a will, it was not only necessary that the guardian should give his consent, but that he should be a party. These facts shew, that the Greek women were under the most complete tutelage, whereby they were deprived of almost all political existence ; and teach us to consider a guardian and his pupil as the substance and the shadow, the later of which

could not exist without the former. But this is not all; we have already mentioned some of the slavish employments to which they were put, and shall now add, that in the heroic ages, the women did all the slavish and domestic offices, even such as were inconsistent with the delicacy and modesty of the sex; they conducted the men to bed, dressed and undressed them, attended them while in the baths, dried and perfumed them when they came out of them; nor were these, and such other offices only allotted to servants or slaves; no rank was exempted from them. The princess Naussica, daughter of Alcinous, carried her own linen to the river in a chariot, and having washed and laid it on the bank, sat down by it, and dined on the provision she had brought along with her. When such was the employment of their own women of rank, we cannot expect that their captives should share a happier fate; accordingly, we find Hector lamenting, that, should Troy be taken, his wife would be condemned to the most slavish drudgery; and Hecuba bewailing, that, like a dog, she was chained at the gate of Agamemnon.

In the state of wedlock, a state of all others the most delicate, the Lacademonians seem to have been destitute of all the finer feelings; for, despising that principle of mutual fidelity, which in some degree appears to have been cherished by every people only a single degree removed from the rudest barbarity, they without any reluctance, borrowed and lent wives with each other; a kind of barter to



tally inconsistent with that sympathetic union of souls, which always does, or ought to take place, between husband and wife : but the matter did not end here ; for, by the laws of Solon, a lusty well-made young fellow might, when he pleased, demand permission to cohabit with the wife of any of his fellow citizens, who was less handsome and robust than himself, under pretence of raising up children to the state, who should, like the father be strong and vigorous ; and such an unreasonable demand, the husband was not at liberty to reject : what still further shews how little delicacy existed in their connections with their wives, is their conduct in a war with the Myssinians ; when, having bound themselves by a solemn oath, not to return to their own city till they had revenged the injury they had received, and the war having been unexpectedly protracted for the space of ten years, they began to be afraid that a longer absence would tend greatly to depopulate their state ; to prevent which, they sent back a certain number of those who had joined the army, after the above mentioned oath had been taken, with full power to cohabit with all the wives, whose husbands were absent. Nothing can more plainly discover the despicable condition of the Grecian women : the state, as a body politic, regarded them only as instruments of general propagation ; and their husbands indelicately acquiesced in the idea, which they never could have done, had they been actuated by any thing but animal appetite, and

had not that appetite been fixed more on the sex than the individual.

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## CHAPTER LXIII.

*Rape of the Sabine Virgins—Women of Scythia, Messageta—Cruelty of Amestris.*

WHEN Romulus, the founder of Rome, had formed his infant republic, finding that he had no women, and that none of the neighboring nations would give their daughters in marriage to men whom they considered as a set of lawless banditti; he was obliged by stratagem to procure for his citizens, what he could not obtain for them by intreaty. Accordingly, having proclaimed a solemn feast, and an exhibition of games in honor of Equestrian Neptune, and by that means gathered a great number of people together; on a signal given, the Romans, with drawn swords in their hands, rushed among the strangers, and forcibly carried away a great number of their daughters to Rome. The next day Romulus himself distributed them as wives to those of his citizens, who had thus by violence carried them away. From so rude a beginning, and among a people so severe and inflexible as the Romans, it is not unnatural for the reader to expect to find, that women were treated in the same indignant, if not in a worse manner, than they were among the nations we have already mentioned. In this, however, he will be mistaken; It was the Romans who first gave to

the sex public liberty, who first properly cultivated their minds, and thought it as necessary as to adorn their bodies : among them were they first fitted for society, and for becoming rational companions ; and among them, was it first demonstrated to the world, that they were capable of great actions, and deserved a better fate than to be shut up in seraglios, and kept only as the pageants of grandeur, or instruments of satisfying illicit love ; truths which the sequel of the history of the Sabine women will amply confirm.

The violent capture of these young women by the Romans, was highly resented by all the neighboring nations, and especially by the Sabines, to whom the greatest part of them belonged ; they sent to demand restitution of their daughters, promising, at the same time, an alliance, and liberty of intermarrying with the Romans, should the demand be complied with. But Romulus not thinking it expedient to part with the only possible means he had of raising citizens, instead of granting what they asked, demanded of the Sabines, that they should confirm the marriages of their daughters with the Romans. These conferences, at last, produced a treaty of peace ; and that, like many others of the same nature, ended in a more inveterate war. The Romans having in this gained some advantages, the Sabines retired ; and having breathed awhile, sent a second embassy to demand their daughters, were again refused, and again commenced hostilities. Being this time more successful, they besieged Romulus in his citadel of Rome,

and threatened immediate destruction to him and all his people, unless their daughters were restored. In this alarming situation, Hersilia, wife of Romulus, demanded an audience of the senate, and laid before them a design, which the women had formed among themselves, without the knowledge of their husbands, which was to act the part of mediators between the contending parties. The proposal being approved, a decree was immediately passed, permitting the women to go on the proposed negotiation ; and only requiring, that each of them should leave one of her children, as a security that she would return ; the rest, they were all allowed to carry with them, as objects which might more effectually move the compassion of their fathers and relations. Thus authorised, the women laid aside their ornaments, put on mourning, and carrying their children in their arms, advanced to the camp of the Sabines, and threw themselves at the feet of their fathers. The Sabine king, having assembled his chief officers, ordered the women to declare for what purpose they were come ; which Hersilia did in so pathetic a manner, that she brought on a conference between the chiefs of the two nations, and this conference, by her mediation, and that of the other women, soon ended in an amicable alliance.

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THIS corruption of manners reigned but too universally among the ancients. The Messagetæ, a people of Scythia, being confin-

ed to one wife, while the nations around them were indulged with the liberty of polygamy and concubinage ; in order to put themselves in some degree on a footing with their neighbors, introduced a kind of community of wives, and a man who had an inclination to the wife of his friend, only carried her into his waggon or hut, and hung up a quiver while she was there, as a sign, that they might not be interrupted. In this manner were decency and the most sacred ties of matrimony publicly violated ; but what decency, what regard to the most solemn institutions can we expect in a people who were so rude and barbarous, that when any of their relations became old, they met together, and along with some cattle set apart for the purpose, sacrificed them to their gods ; then having boiled together the flesh of the human and the more ignoble victims, they devoured it as a most delicious repast. The Lydians were still more debauched than the Messagetæ. In the reign of Jardanes, so ungovernable was their lust, that Omphale, the king's only daughter, could scarcely, even within the walls of the royal palace, find shelter from the licentious multitude. Omphale at length succeeding to the throne of her father, punished with the utmost severity such as had formerly abused her ; on the women, whom it appears she considered as not less criminal than the men, she revenged herself in a singular manner ; she ordered, that over all her kingdom, they should be shut up with their slaves.

The Scythians, whose character is far from being the most abandoned of the ancients, seem not to have much cause to boast of the chastity and fidelity of their women; the greatest part of their men having on some occasion made an expedition into Asia, were detained much beyond their expectation, when their wives, either impatient for their long absence, or despairing of their return, took their servants and slaves, and invested them in all the privileges of their absent husbands. These, sometime after hearing that their masters were about to return, fortified and intrenched themselves, in order to hinder them from entering into their own country, and claiming their wives and possessions. The Scythians having advanced to their slaves, several skirmishes were fought between them, with doubtful success, when one of their leaders advised his countrymen not to fight again with their own slaves as with equals, nor to attack them with warlike weapons, which were signs of freedom, but with such whips and scourges as they had formerly been accustomed to make them feel. This advice being put into execution, the whips recalled their ideas of slavery, and all the pusillanimity naturally attending it; they threw down their arms and fled in confusion, many of them were taken and put to death, and not a few of the unfaithful wives destroyed themselves, to avoid the resentment of their injured husbands. Tho' this story has been by different authors varied in several of its circumstances, yet as so many have agreed in relating it, we have not

the least doubt of its authenticity, especially as we are assured that the Novogorodians, whose city stands in Sarmatian Scythia, had formerly a coin stamped in memory of it, with a man on horseback shaking a whip in his hand; and it is supposed that the ancient custom in Russia, which is now happily forgot, of the bride presenting the bridegroom on the nuptial night with a whip, originated from this story of the Scythian wives.

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IN countries where there is, as in Persia, an unlimited liberty of polygamy and concubinage, jealousy in the fair sex is a passion much weakened by the variety of objects that divide it, and the restraint laid on it by the despotism of the men; we should not therefore expect to find it operating very strongly. But even here, where the king is the severest despot of the country, and women only the tools of his lust, and slaves of his power, we meet with instances of this passion exerting itself in the most cruel manner. Xemes, among many other amours, had conceived a passion for the wife of his brother Masistus, which he prosecuted for a long time by promises and threatenings, without any success, when quite tired of so many fruitless efforts, he at last changed his attack from the mother to her daughter, who, with much less opposition, yielded herself to his wishes. Amestris his queen, having discovered the amour, and imagining that the daughter only acted by the direction of her

mother, from that moment resolved on the severest revenge. By ancient custom in Persia, the queen had a right, on the king's birthday, to demand of him any favour that she thought proper; Amestris asked that the wife of Masistus should be delivered into her hands, whom she had no sooner received, than she ordered her breasts, nose, tongue and lips to be cut off, and thrown to the dogs, and that she should be detained to see her own flesh devoured by them.

Among a people so abandoned, and so much the slaves of cruelty and lust, a people who made every thing subservient to voluptuousness and debauchery, it is natural to think that modesty among the fair sex could scarcely have any existence. This, however, was not universally the case; a few women, even in Persia, were far from being destitute of that modesty and sensibility which are the ornament of their sex, and the delight of ours. Atossa, the daughter of Cyrus, and the wife of Darius, being attacked with a cancer in her breast, and thinking it inconsistent with the modesty of her sex to discover the diseased part, suffered in silence, till the pain became intolerable, when, after many struggles in her own mind, she at last prevailed on herself to shew it to Democedes, her physician. We might mention more particular instances of the modesty of the Persian women, but we pass over them, to take notice of an anecdote of a lady in a neighbouring kingdom, which shews, that, in the times under review, there were some



women susceptible of sentiment and feeling ; things which are not frequently met with in the East. Tygranes and his new married wife being taken prisoners by Cyrus, Tygranes offered a great ransom for her liberty ; Cyrus generously released them both without any reward ; as soon as they were alone, the happy couple, naturally falling into a discourse concerning their benefactor ; “ What do you think,” said Tygranes, “ of his aspect and deportment ? ” “ I did not observe either,” said the lady. “ Upon what then did you fix your eyes,” said Tygranes ? “ Upon the man,” returned she, “ who generously offered so great a ransom for my liberty.”

So little was modesty and chastity cultivated among the ancients, that many nations seem to have had no idea of either. The Ausi, a people of Lybia, cohabited so promiscuously with their women, that the whole of the children of the state were considered as a community till they were able to walk alone, when, being brought by their mothers into a public assembly of the people, the man to whom a child first spoke was obliged to acknowledge himself its father. The wives of the Bactrians were, through a long series of years, famed for licentiousness ; and custom had given such sanction to their crimes, that the husbands had not only lost all power of restraining them, but even durst hardly venture to complain of their infidelity. In Cyprus, an island sacred to Venus, the very rites of their religion were all mingled

with debauchery and prostitution. And the Lydians, and many other nations, publicly prostituted their daughters, and other female relations, for hire. But to multiply instances of the depravity of ancient manners would be endless; mankind, even when bridled by the strongest penal laws, and restricted in their passions by the sacred voice of religion, are but too often, in the pursuit of unlawful pleasures, apt to disregard both; what then must they have been before society, before laws existed, and when religion lent its sanction to encourage the vices and deprave the heart? In those times we have the greatest reason to believe that debauchery reigned with but little controul over two-thirds of the habitable globe.



## CHAPTER LXIV.

*Japanese Delicacy—Delicacy of the Lydians—Licentious Law of Denmark—Extraordinary women.*

AMONG people holding a middling degree, or rather perhaps something below a middle degree, between the most uncultivated rusticity, and the most refined politeness, we find female delicacy in its highest perfection. The Japanese are but just emerged some degrees above savage barbarity, and in their history we are presented by Kempfer, with an instance of the effect of delicacy, which perhaps has not a parallel in any other

country. A lady being at a table in a promiscuous company, in reaching for something that she wanted, accidentally broke wind backwards, by which her delicacy was so much wounded, that she immediately arose, laid hold on her breasts with her teeth, and tore them till she expired on the spot. In Scotland, and a few other parts of the north of Europe, where the inhabitants are some degrees farther advanced in politeness than the Japanese, a woman would be almost as much ashamed to be detected going to the temple of Cloacina, as to that of Venus. In England, to go in the most open manner to that of the former, hardly occasions a blush on the most delicate cheek. At Paris, we are told that a gallant frequently accompanies his mistress to the shrine of the goddess, stands centinel at the door, and entertains her with bonmots, and protestations of love all the time she is worshipping there; and that a lady when in a carriage, whatever company be along with her, if called upon to exonerate nature, pulls the cord, orders the driver to stop, steps out, and having performed what nature required, resumes her seat without the least ceremony or discomposure.—The Parisian women, as well as those in many of the other large towns of France, even in the most public companies make no scruple of talking concerning those secrets of their sex, which almost in every other country are reckoned indelicate in the ears of the men: nay, so little is their reserve on this head, that a young lady on being asked

by her lover to dance, will without blush or hesitation, excuse herself on account of the impropriety of doing so in her present circumstances. The Italians, it is said, carry their indelicacy still farther : women even of character and fashion, when asked a favour of another kind, will with the utmost composure decline the proposal on account of being at present under a course of medicine for the cure of a certain disorder. When a people have arrived at that point in the scale of politeness, which entirely discards delicacy, the chastity of their women must be at a low ebb ; for delicacy is the centinel that is placed over female virtue, and that centinel once overcome, chastity is more than half conquered.

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**EVEN** among the Lydians, a people who were highly debauched ; it appears that female delicacy was far from being totally extinguished ; Candaules, one of their kings, being married to a lady of exquisite beauty, was perpetually boasting of her charms to his courtiers, and at last, to satisfy his favourite Gyges that he had not exaggerated the description, he took the dangerous and indelicate resolution of giving him an opportunity of seeing her naked. To accomplish this, Gyges was conveyed by the king into a secret place, where he might see the queen dress and undress, from whence, however, as he retired, she accidentally spied him, but taking no notice of him for the present, she only set

herself to consider the most proper method of revenging her injured modesty, and punishing her indelicate husband; having resolved how to proceed, she sent for Gyges, and told him that as she could not tamely submit to the stain which had been offered to her honour, she insisted that he should expiate his crime either by his own death or that of the king, that two men might not be living at the same time who had thus seen her in a state of nature. Gyges, after some fruitless remonstrances, performed the latter, married the queen, and mounted the throne of Lydia.— Besides the fables and historical anecdotes of antiquity, their poets seldom exhibited a female character in its loveliest form, without adorning it with the graces of modesty and delicacy; hence we may infer, that these qualities have not only been always essential to virtuous women in civilized countries, but have been also constantly praised and esteemed by men of sensibility.

Plutarch, in his treatise, entitled, “The Virtuous Actions of Women,” mentions several anecdotes which strongly favour our ideas of delicacy being an innate principle in the female mind; the most striking is that of the young women of Milesia, many of whom, about that time of life, when nature giving birth to restless and turbulent desires inflames the imagination, and astonishes the heart at the sensation of wants which virtue forbids to gratify, to free themselves from the conflict between nature and virtue, laid violent hands on themselves; the contagion becoming every

day more general, to put a stop to it, a law was made, ordaining that every one who committed that crime should be brought naked to the market place and publicly exposed to the people ; and so powerfully did the idea of this indelicate exposure, even after death, operate on their minds, that from thenceforth not one of them ever made an attempt on her own life.

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THIS institution of auricular confession, in the light which we have just now considered it, lays an obstacle in the way of unchastity, by exposing it to public shame, which in all civilized countries is one of the strongest passions which mark the female character. But women are now become too cunning to fall into the snare ; and while their actions of this kind remain private, it is presumable they seldom confess them. But as the exposure to public shame is one of the most powerful methods of laying hold of the mind of the sex, the laws of society, as well as those of religious institutions, have availed themselves of it, and made it, among every polished people, one of the severest parts of the punishment to which the female delinquent, who has departed from the path of rectitude, is exposed ; and consequently one of the greatest obstacles which can be thrown in the road to unchastity. This appears from the conduct of the women of Iceland, when the public shame attending incontinency was suspended on the following occasion : In the year one thousand seven

hundred and seven, a great part of the inhabitants of Iceland having died of a contagious distemper, the king of Denmark, in order to repeople the country in a more expeditious manner than the common rules of procreation admitted of, made a law, authorising all young women to have each six bastards, without being exposed to any shame, or suffering the loss of reputation. This succeeded beyond the expectation of the monarch; and the young women employed themselves so sedulously in the affair of population, that, in a few years, it was thought necessary to abrogate the law, lest the country should be overstocked with inhabitants, and that sense of shame annexed to unchastity, so much obliterated from the female breast, that neither law nor custom would be able afterwards to revive it. Were it not almost self-evident to every one, that this public shame attending female indiscretion, is one of the strongest motives to secure their chastity, we might prove it more fully from other circumstances. Nothing can be more certain, than that in those countries where no shame is fixed to any action, there is no public chastity; and that this virtue flourishes the most, where its contrary vices are branded with the very greatest degree of infamy.

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WHAT we have now advanced, points out to us the reason, why women have seldom or never contributed to the improvement of the abstract sciences: but there is

still another reason ; the sex are almost every where neglected in their education, and in some degree slaves ; and it is well known, that slavery throws a damp on the genius, clouds the spirits, and takes more than half the worth away from every human being.— The history of every period, and of every people, presents us with some extraordinary women, who have soared above all these disadvantages, and shone in all the different characters, which render men eminent and conspicuous. Syria furnishes us with a Semiramis, Africa with a Zenobia ; both famous for their heroism and skill in government.— Greece and Rome, with many who set public examples of courage and fortitude ; Germany and England have exhibited queens, whose talents in the field, and in the cabinet, would have done honor to any sex ; but it was reserved for Russia, in the person of the present Empress, to join both talents, and to add to them, what is still more noble, an inclination to favour the sciences, and restore the natural rights of mankind ; rights which almost every other sovereign has endeavoured to destroy. Upon the whole, we may conclude, that though in the progress of mankind from ignorance to knowledge, women have, for the reasons already assigned, seldom taken the lead, yet they have not been backward to follow the path to utility or improvement, when pointed out to them.



## CHAPTER LXV.

*Courage of Savage women—Desperate act of Euthira—Luxurious Dress of the Grecian Ladies—First use of Hair Powder.*

AMONG the Esquimaux, and several other savage people, the women go out to hunt and fish along with the men. In these excursions, it is necessary for them not only to have courage to attack whatever comes in their way, but to encounter the storms of a tempestuous climate, and endure the hardships of famine, and every other evil, incident to such a mode of life, in so inhospitable a country. In some places, where the woods afford little game for the subsistence of the natives, and they are consequently obliged to procure it from the stormy seas which surround them, women hardly show less courage, or less dexterity, in encountering the waves, than the men. In Greenland, they will put off to sea in a vessel; and in a storm, which would make the most hardy European tremble. In many of the islands of the South Sea, they will plunge into the waves, and swim through the surf, which no European dare attempt. In Himia, one of the Greek Islands, young girls, before they be permitted to marry, are obliged to fish up a certain quantity of pearls, and dive for them at a certain depth. Many of the other pearl-fisheries are carried on by women, who, besides the danger of diving, are exposed to

attacks of the voracious shark, and other ravenous sea-animals, who frequently watch to devour them.

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IN ancient and modern history, we are frequently presented with accounts of women, who, preferring death to slavery or prostitution, sacrificed their lives with the most undaunted courage to avoid them. Apollodorus tells us, that Hercules having taken the city of Troy, prior to the famous siege of it celebrated by Homer, carried away captive the daughters of Laomedon then king. One of these, named Euthira, being left with several other Trojan captives on board the Grecian fleet, while the sailors went on shore to take in fresh provisions, had the resolution to propose, and the power to persuade her companions, to set the ships on fire, and to perish themselves amid the devouring flames.—The women of Phoenicia met together before an engagement which was to decide the fate of their city, and having agreed to bury themselves in the flames, if their husbands and relations were defeated, in the enthusiasm of their courage and resolution, they crowned her with flowers who first made the proposal. Many instances occur in the history of the Romans, of the Gauls and Germans, and of other nations in subsequent periods; where women being driven to despair by their enemies, have bravely defended their walls, or waded through fields of blood to assist their countrymen, and free themselves

from slavery or from ravishment. Such heroic efforts are beauties, even in the character of the softer sex, when they proceed from necessity : when from choice, they are blemishes of the most unnatural kind, indicating a heart of cruelty, lodged in a form which has the appearance of gentleness and peace.

It has been alleged by some of the writers on human nature, that to the fair sex the loss of beauty is more alarming and insupportable than the loss of life ; but even this loss, however opposite to the feelings of their nature, they have voluntarily consented to sustain, that they might not be the objects of temptation to the lawless ravisher. The nuns of a convent in France, fearing they should be violated by a ruffian army, which had taken by storm the town in which their convent was situated, at the recommendation of their abbess, mutually agreed to cut off all their noses, that they might save their chastity by becoming objects of disgust instead of desire. Were we to descend to particulars, we could give innumerable instances of women, who from Semiramis down to the present time, have distinguished themselves by their courage. Such was Penthesilea, who, if we may credit ancient story, led her army of viragoes to the assistance of Priam king of Troy ; Thomyris, who encountered Cyrus king of Persia ; and Thalestris, famous for her fighting, as well as for her amours with Alexander the Great. Such was Boadicea, queen of the Britons, who led on that people to revenge the wrongs done to herself and

her country by the Romans. And in later periods, such was the Maid of Orleans, and Margaret of Anjou; which last, according to several historians, commanded at no less than twelve pitched battles. But we do not choose to multiply instances of this nature, as we have already said enough to shew, that the sex are not destitute of courage when that virtue becomes necessary; and were they possessed of it, when unnecessary, it would divest them of one of the principal qualities for which we love, and for which we value them. No woman was ever held up as a pattern to her sex, because she was intrepid and brave; no woman ever conciliated the affections of the men, by rivaling them in what they reckon the peculiar excellencies of their own character.

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AS the Greeks emerged from the barbarity of the heroic ages, among other articles of culture, they began to bestow more attention on the convenience and elegance of dress.—At Athens, the ladies commonly employ the whole morning in dressing themselves in a decent and becoming manner; their toilette consisted in paints and washes, of such a nature as to clear and beautify the skin, and they took great care to clean their teeth, an article too much neglected: some also blackened their eye-brows, and, if necessary, supplied the deficiency of the vermilion on their lips, by a paint said to have been exceedingly beautiful. At this time the women in the

Greek islands make much use of a paint which they call Sulama, which imparts a beautiful redness to the cheeks, and gives the skin a remarkable gloss. Possibly this may be the same with that made use of in the times we are considering; but however that be, some of the Greek ladies at present gild their faces all over on the day of their marriage, and consider this coating as an irresistible charm; and in the island of Scios, their dress does not a little resemble that of ancient Sparta, for they go with their bosoms uncovered, and with gowns which only reach to the calf of their leg, in order to shew their fine garters, which are commonly red ribbons curiously embroidered. But to return to ancient Greece, the ladies spent likewise a part of their time in composing head-dresses, and though we have reason to suppose that they were not then so preposterously fantastic as those presently composed by a Parisian milliner, yet they were probably objects of no small industry and attention, especially as we find that they then dyed their hair, perfumed it with the most costly essences, and by the means of hot-irons disposed of it in curls, as fancy or fashion directed. Their clothes were made of stuffs so extremely light and fine as to show their shapes, without offending against the rules of decency. At Sparta, the case was widely different; we shall not describe the dress of the women, it is sufficient to say that it has been loudly complained of by almost every ancient author who has treated on the subject.

From what has now been related it appears, that the women of antiquity were not less solicitous about their persons than the moderns, and that the materials for decorating them, were neither so few, nor so simple, as has been by some imagined; facts which, in the review of the Romans, will appear still more conspicuous. In the more early periods of that great republic, the Romans, in their persons as well as in their manners, were simple and unadorned; we shall, therefore, pass over the attire of these times, and confine our observations to those when the wealth of the whole world centered within the walls of Rome.

The Roman ladies went to bathe in the morning, and from thence returned to the toilette, where women of rank and fortune had a number of slaves to attend on and do every thing for them, while themselves, looking, constantly in their glasses, practised various attitudes, studied the airs of negligence, the smiles that best became them, and directed the placing of every lock of the hair, and every part of the head-dress. Coquetts, ladies of morose temper, and those whose charms had not attracted so much notice as they expected, often blamed the slaves who dressed them for this want of success; and if we may believe Juvenal, sometimes chastised them for it with the most unfeeling severity. At first, the maids who attended the toilette were to assist in adjusting every part of the dress, but afterwards each had her proper task assigned her; one had the comb-

ing, curling, and dressing of the hair ; another managed the perfumes ; a third disposed of the jewels, as fancy or fashion directed ; a fourth laid on the paint and cosmetics : all these, and several others, had names expressive of their different employments ; but besides these, whose business it was to put their hands to the labour of the toilette, there were others, who, acting in a station more exalted, only attended to give their opinion and advice, to declare what colours most suited the complexion, and what method of dressing gave the greatest additional lustre to the charms of nature. To this important council of the toilette we have no account of the male sex being ever admitted ; this useful, though perhaps indelicate invention was reserved for the ladies of Paris, who wisely considering, that as they dress only for the men, the men must be the best judges of what will please themselves.

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BUT the disposing of the hair in various forms and figures ; the interweaving it with ribbons, jewels, and gold ; were not the only methods they made use of to make it agreeable to taste ; light coloured hair had the preference of all others ; both men and women therefore dyed their hair of this colour, then perfumed it with sweet-scented essences, and powdered it with gold dust ; a custom of the highest extravagance, which the Romans brought from Asia, and which according to Josephus, was practised among the Jews. White hair-powder was not then invented,

nor did the use of it come into fashion till towards the end of the sixteenth century ; the first writer who mentions it is L'Etoile, who relates, that in the year 1593, the Nuns walked the streets of Paris curled and powdered ; from that time the custom of powdering has become so common, that in most places of Europe, but especially in France, it is used by both sexes, and by people of all ages, ranks and conditions.

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## CHAPTER LXVI.

### *Grecian and Spartan Indecency—Cruelty of the Grecian Women.*

IN a preceding chapter we have observed, that, during the whole of what are called the heroic ages, the history of Greece is nothing but a compound of the most absurd fable ; from that fable it however appears, that their gods and men employed much of their time and ingenuity in seducing, stealing, and forcibly debauching their young women, circumstances which naturally suggest an idea that those women who could not be obtained by any other means must have been virtuous : nor indeed does it appear that they were then much less so than in those succeeding periods, when the Greeks flourished in all their splendor, and were reckoned a highly polished people ; nay, they were perhaps, more so, for infant colonies and kingdoms commonly display more virtue than those already arrived at maturity ;



the reason is plain, the first have not yet attained riches, the sources of idleness and debauchery, the last have attained them, and are corrupted. But the Greeks, even in the infancy of their existence as a people, seem to have been remarkably vicious, for we hardly meet with any thing in their early history but murder, rapes, and usurpations ; witness the transactions of the kingdom of Mycene, of Pelops, and his descendants. The rapes of Io, Proserpine, Helena, &c. all of which stain the character of their gods and men with the foulest infamy ; and as it has never happened in any nation that the one sex has been exceedingly vicious, and the other not participated of its crimes, we may conclude that the Greek women were, in the heroic ages, far from being famous for any of the moral virtues. The greatest part of the Grecian princes who assembled at the siege of Troy, were guilty of many of the most enormous crimes, while their wives, not less flagitious, murdered almost the whole of them after their return ; a thing nearly incredible, when we consider that in those times custom had condemned the wife who had lost a husband to perpetual widowhood ; but even custom, though often more regarded than all the laws of heaven and earth, must in time yield to a general corruption of manners.

But to proceed to times of which we are better informed. The women of other nations were indecent through the strength of their ungovernable passions ; some of the Greek women were obliged to be indecent by

law. In Sparta, what virtue, what decorum can we expect, when even the strongest temptations to vice had the public sanction of the legislature? In the heroic ages, while ignorance and brutality of manners prevailed, we are not much surprised to find the women conducting the men to the baths, undressing them, and attending to dress and rub them when they came out; but in Sparta, famed for its salutary laws, and when Greece was in its most polished condition, we are amazed to find that both sexes resorted to, and bathed together in the public baths. And this amazement is still heightened, when we are assured that here also plays were acted by order of the legislator, where young people of both sexes were obliged to fight, and to dance naked on the stage, that the men, according to his ideas, might be thereby excited to matrimony. What were the consequences of the indecencies we have now mentioned? The intention of Lycurgus, if he really had any such intention, was but little attended to, and it is agreed on all hands, that both sexes went to those plays only for the sake of debauchery; and further, that, disgusted by this shameless exposure, the men paid less regard to the women, and the women became less virtuous, and at last grew dissolute to such a degree as to be thereby distinguished from all the other women of Greece. Euripides, and some others of the Greek authors, bestow upon them epithets which decency will not allow us to translate, nor were these epithets the overflowings of the gall of satyric poets and vio-

lent declaimers only, but the cool and considerate reflections of the impartial historian ; but we would not be understood as altogether confining dissoluteness and debauchery to the women of Sparta, those of many of the other states were little inferior to them. In Thracia and Bœotia, they every third year held a festival in memory of the expedition of Bacchus into India, at which both married women and virgins, with javelins in their hands and dishevelled hair, ran about like furies bellowing the praises of the god, and committing every disorder suggested by madness and folly.

Whatever public prostitution becomes so fashionable that it is attended with no disgrace in the opinion of the male, and with exceedingly little in that of the female sex, there, we may assure ourselves, the morals of the women are highly contaminated ; a circumstance of which Athens afforded the most glaring proof. In that city courtezans were not only kept in a public manner by most of the young men of fashion, but greatly countenanced, and even publicly visited by Solon their law-giver, who applauded such young men as were found in the stews, because their going to these places rendered them less apt to attempt the virtue of modest women.— But Athenian courtezans were not only visited by their great lawgiver, but also by the celebrated Socrates, and most of their other philosophers, who, not content with going frequently to see them themselves, even sometimes carried their wives and daughters along with them ; a circumstance of which we do not

recollect to have heard in any other country, and which could not but tend to give these wives a mean opinion of virtue, when they saw the preference that was given to vice; and when such of their own sex as thus publicly deviated from the paths of chastity were so openly esteemed and regarded, it was natural for those of a different character to pay the less regard to that chastity, the practising of which gained them no superior privilege nor advantage.

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AS the female form is of a softer and more delicate nature than that of the male, so their minds are generally more finely attuned to the gentler feelings of tenderness and humanity; but the Grecian women, either by nature, or more probably by custom, were in this respect miserably deficient. At an annual festival, celebrated in honor of Diana, all the children of Sparta were whipt till the blood ran down on the altar of the goddess. Under this cruel ceremony, which was inflicted, as they pretended, to accustom them to bear pain without murmuring, some almost every year, expired. The inhuman barbarity was performed in the presence of the whole city; the fathers, and what our female readers will hardly credit, even the mothers, beholding their children bathed in blood, and ready to expire with pain, stood exhorting them to suffer the number of lashes assigned them, without a groan or a complaint. It may be alledged here, that women being spectators

and encouragers of a cruel ceremony, is no proof of their want of proper feelings, but only an instance of the power of custom. A doctrine to which we cannot altogether assent, being persuaded, that there are many of the fair sex, of a composition so humane and tender, that even custom could not reconcile them to barbarity ; but allowing it to have that power, what folly were the men guilty of in instituting such a ceremony ! they were robbing the women of every thing valuable in the female mind, and labouring to make them what they were not intended to be by nature.

But this inhuman custom was not the only proof of the Greek women were divested of that female tenderness which we so much admire in the sex. There was in Greece a custom, if possible, still more barbarous ; as soon as a boy was born at Sparta, he was visited by a deputation of the elders of each tribe ; if he appeared to be of a weakly constitution, and not likely to become a stout and healthful member of their state, they judged him not to be worth the trouble of rearing ; and therefore ordered him to be thrown into a quagmire, at the bottom of the Mountain Taygeta. This was valuing human beings, exactly as we would do an ox or an ass ; and entirely setting aside all the moral turpitude of murder. It was only, however practised at Sparta ; and we should have hoped, that, even there, it was contrary to the inclination, and without the consent of the women ; were we not assured by a variety of authors that the Spartan dames, in every

circumstance, almost, entirely governed their husbands. To the barbarous customs now mentioned, we shall add only one more: To so weak and expiring a state was the paternal instinct of nature reduced among the Greeks, that they frequently, as we have already related, exposed such children as they were not able, or did not chuse to maintain.\* A barbarity, which, more or less, prevailed in all the Grecian states; except at Thebes, a city, where, to the immortal honor of the inhabitants, it was so much abhorred, that, by their laws, it was capitally punished. We shall finish this subject, by observing, that the Spartan matrons received the news of their sons having been slain in battle, not only without any signs of grief, but even with an appearance of extravagant joy and satisfaction, which they took the most early opportunity of shewing in public. Those same women, however, who pretended to have imbibed so much heroism, that they were strangers to every fear, but such as arose on account of their country, when they saw Epaminondas, after the battle of Leuctra, marching his victorious army towards Sparta, testified by their behaviour, that they were subject to fears of another nature; and that all their joys and sorrows arose not solely from the prosperity or adversity of their country. They ran up and down the streets in terror and despair, filling

\* Though the Greeks might expose infants, they could not sell a daughter, or a sister, unless she became a whore.

the air with shrieks, and transfusing their own timidity into the men, caused more disorder than the approach of the victorious army.

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## CHAPTER LXVII.

*Drunkenness of some Grecian Women—Story of Lucretia—Indecency of Roman women—Indecency of Savage Nations.*

WHEN we come to the history of the matrimonial compact, we shall see how the Grecian women behaved to their husbands; and shall at present sum up the rest of their character, by observing, that at Athens, even drunkenness seems to have been among the number of their vices; as is evident by a law of Solon, in which it is enacted, that no woman shall be attended by more than one servant when she goes abroad, unless when she is drunk. It would seem that the Athenian women also made use of the darkness of the night to screen them in their intrigues; for another law of Solon ordains, that no woman shall walk abroad at night unless she intends to play the whore; and from several other ordinances of this legislator, it plainly appears, that to keep women within the bounds of that decorum proper to their sex, was a matter of no small difficulty; for, to the laws we have just now mentioned, he was obliged to add others, which shew that the sex were only to be governed by coercive measures. He ordained, that no woman should go out of the

city with more provisions than could be purchased for an obolus, nor with a basket higher than a cubit; and if a woman went abroad at night, she was to be carried in a waggon, preceded by a flambeau: from all which it seems evident, that the design of Solon was to make the Athenian women decent and virtuous. If Lycurgus had the same intention in the laws that he gave the Lacedemonians, we cannot help thinking that he had but ill studied human nature; for as a learned author of the present age has observed, though nakedness of both sexes is no incentive to lust, and though the inhabitants of countries where no cloathes are used, are not on this account less virtuous than their neighbours, where they are used, yet there may be modes of cloathing which more powerfully excite the passions, than the most absolute nakedness. Of this kind, in our opinion, was the dress of Sparta. We shall have occasion afterwards to describe it, and at present shall only observe, that it has been exclaimed against by a variety of the writers of antiquity.

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THOUGH such is the general character of the Greeks, we have happily no instance of a corruption of manners having spread itself over a whole nation, in such a manner as to leave nobody free from the contagion. In the midst of licentiousness and barbarity, at least in those periods, that were subsequent to the siege of Troy, the Grecian women afford us several instances of chastity, conjugal fi-



delity, and maternal affection. In the heroic ages, or those periods when their states were in infancy, they appear to have been abandoned almost to every species of wickedness ; but when we turn to the Romans, we find the case quite otherwise. In the earlier periods of the Roman republic, before the wealth poured in from innumerable conquests, had introduced luxury and dissipation, no women were more famous for their virtues, none more infamous afterwards for their vices. The whole history of Rome, for several ages after its foundation, bears testimony of the tenderness, frugality, and chastity of her women. Of this nothing can be a stronger proof, than the long period that intervened between the foundation of the republic and the first divorce ; a period of five hundred and twenty years, though the men had a power of divorcing their wives almost at pleasure. To this proof we could add a great variety of others, but shall only mention the story of the rape of Lucretia, which in the strongest manner demonstrates the value which the Roman women set upon the most unspotted chastity. Lucretia, being violated in secret, could not have found the smallest difficulty in concealing what had happened ; and besides, should it have been discovered, the fraud and force made use of against her were sufficient to have quieted her conscience, and exculpated her to her husband and the public from every imputation of criminality : yet, so exalted were her ideas of chastity, that she was resolved not to give back to the arms of her husband, a body even

involuntarily polluted, nor to survive the guiltless stain which her honor had suffered; but calling together her friends in the presence of her husband, she revealed them the secret of the rape that had been committed upon her; and while conjuring them to revenge her injured name, she stabbed herself in the breast with a dagger she had concealed under her garments for that purpose.

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**COURTS** are but too frequently the seminaries of vice. This was evidently the case at Rome. The empress generally took the lead in lawless indulgence; the example of the great is commonly followed by the little: from the court, a scene of the most shameless libertinism, hardly to be paralleled in history, disseminated itself all over Rome. Women danced naked on the stage, bathed promiscuously with the men, and, with more than masculine effrontery, committed every sort of irregularity. By the unbounded licence thus given to unlawful pleasures, matrimony became unfashionable, and was considered as a confinement and a burden, not consistent with Roman freedom and independence. To these ideas also the conduct of the married women did not a little contribute, and raised in the husbands such a disgust at marriage, that even Metellus the Censor, who ought to have been the protector of that institution, made the following speech to the people against it: "If it were possible for us to do without wives, we should deliver

ourselves from this evil; but as nature has ordained, that we cannot live very happily with them, nor without them, we ought to have more regard to our own preservation, than to transient gratifications." Rome is the only place that ever furnished an instance of a general conspiracy among the married women to poison their husbands.

A variety of laws were from time to time devised by the Romans to stop the progress of public prostitution. Among others it was ordained, that all courtezans should take out a licence from the court of the *Ædiles*; which they should renew once every year, and without which they should not be allowed to carry on their trade; that their names, and the price of their favours, should be wrote upon the doors of their houses. These, one would have imagined, were such conditions as no women who had the least remaining spark of sensibility would have agreed to. But the torrent of vice was not to be stopped so easily: women, who were wives and daughters to Roman knights, were not ashamed to apply for such licences; and the infection was even reaching higher. *Vistilla*, a lady of a *Prætorian* family, with an unparalleled effrontery appeared in public court before the *Ædiles*, and declaring herself a prostitute, demanded a licence to enable her to exercise her trade. Debauched as the Romans then were, under a prince so dissolute as *Tiberius*, their fears were alarmed; and the senate enacted several laws to restrain at least women of rank from degrading them-

selves and families by a conduct so infamous : they ordained, no woman whose father, grandfather, or husband, was a Roman knight, or of any higher quality, should be allowed to take upon her the trade of prostitution.— The debauchery of the women was also the occasion of the Voconian law, which we have already mentioned ; but when corruption had interwoven itself so dexterously into the manners and customs of the Romans, laws became too feeble to bring on a reformation. The emperor Titus prohibited all public stews : the prohibition was but little regarded. When Severus mounted the throne, he found on the roll of causes to be tried, no less than three thousand prosecutions for adultery : he had formed a scheme of reformation ; from that moment he abandoned it as impossible.

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IN savage life, female delicacy has no existence : the most absolute nakedness raises not a blush ; nor can any action excite the idea of shame : and as chastity itself has not, in many places, the same value stamped upon it as in civil society, deviations from it are either considered as no fault, or at most as a fault of a very trifling nature, which neither draws down on a delinquent the ridicule and contempt of her own sex, nor the neglect and desertion of ours. The instances we could give of this would be almost endless. Among the Natches, husbands voluntarily lend their wives to each other, and married as well as

unmarried women, without the least ceremony, offer themselves to strangers; nay, in some places, they even complain to their countrymen, and desire them to revenge the indignity they have suffered, when refused by a stranger. In the district of the Hurons, not the least degree of criminality is fixed upon her who offers herself to prostitution: it is a practice, into which girls are early initiated by their parents, and in which the custom of their country continues them thro' life. In many parts of South America, so little restraint is laid on the commerce of the sexes, that it plainly appears to be considered as an object not worthy of legislation. Don Ulloa reports, that the ancient Peruvians did not knowingly marry such women as were virgins, and if on trial they found them such, were highly affronted at being imposed upon: and it is said, that in the kingdom of Thibet, no woman who has not been deflowered is reckoned fit for matrimony.

The Brazillian women are so far from paying any regard to chastity, that they even violate every principle of decency; not being in the least ashamed to prepare and administer to the men stimulating potions, to create or increase their natural desires; which when they wish to raise to an extravagant height, the potions sometimes prove mortal. At Mindanao, as soon as a stranger arrives, the natives flock about him, and eagerly invite him to their houses: the person whose invitation he accepts, is sure to offer him a female companion, whom he is obliged to

accept, and to return a genteel present for the unsolicited favour. This custom, which, besides implying an absolute and disposing power in the male, likewise supposes female unchastity to be a matter of no consideration, is observed at Pulo Condore, Pegu, Siam, Cochin-China, Cambodia, in some places of the East Indies, and on the coast of Guinea. In Otaheite, chastity does not seem to be considered as one of the virtues, nor is the most public violation of it looked upon either as criminal or indecent. The women not only readily and openly trafficked with the English sailors for personal favours, but were brought by their fathers and brothers for that purpose, as to a market; and those who brought them were always abundantly conscious of the superior value of youth and beauty.

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## CHAPTER LXVIII.

*Naked Fakiers—Mahometan plurality of Wives—Women of Otaheite.*

SO different over all the world are the sects of saints, as well as of sinners, that besides the Bramins, a set of innocent and religious priests, who have rendered their women virtuous by treating them with kindness and humanity, there are another sect of religious-philosophical drones, called Fakiers, who contribute as much as they can to debauch the sex, under a pretence of superior sanctity.

These hypocritical saints, like some of the ridiculous sects which formerly existed in Europe, wear no clothes; considering them only as proper appendages to sinners, who are ashamed, because they are sensible of guilt; while they, being free from every stain of pollution, have no shame to cover. In this original state of nature, these idle and pretended devotees, assemble together sometimes in armies of ten or twelve thousand, and under a pretence of going in pilgrimage to certain temples, like locusts devour every thing on their way; the men flying before them, and carrying all that they can out of the reach of their depredations; while the women, not in the least afraid of a naked army of lusty saints, throw themselves in their way, or remain quietly at home to receive them.

It has long been an opinion, well established all over India, that there are not in nature so powerful a remedy for removing the sterility of women, as the prayers of these sturdy naked saints. On this account, barren women constantly apply to them for assistance; which when the good-natured Fakier has an inclination to grant, he leaves his slipper, or his staff at the door of the lady's apartment with whom he is praying; a symbol so sacred, that it effectually prevents any one from violating the secrecy of their devotion: but, should he neglect this signal, and at the same time be distant from the protection of his brethren, a sound drubbing is frequently the reward of his pious endeavors. But though they will venture sometimes, in Hindostan,

to treat a Fakier, in this unholy manner; in other parts of Asia and Africa, such is the veneration in which these lusty saints are held, that they not only have access when they please, to perform private devotions with barren women, but are accounted so holy, that they may at any time, in public or in private, confer a personal favor upon a woman, without bringing upon her either shame or guilt; and no woman dare refuse to gratify their passion. Nor indeed, has any one an inclination of this kind; because she, upon whom this personal favour has been conferred, is considered by herself, and by all the people, as having been sanctified and made more holy by the action.

So much concerning the conduct of the Fakiers in debauching women, seems certain. But it is by travellers further related, that whenever they find a woman who is exceedingly handsome, they carry her off privately to one of their temples; but in such a manner, as to make her and the people believe, that she was carried away by the god who is there worshipped; who being violently in love with her took that method to procure her for his wife. This done, they perform a nuptial ceremony, and make her further believe, that she is married to the god; when, in reality, she is only married to one of the Fakiers who personates him. Women who are treated in this manner are revered by the people as the wives of the gods, and by that stratagem secured solely to the Fakiers, who have cunning enough to impose themselves as gods



upon some of these women, through the whole of their lives. In countries where reason is stronger than superstition, we almost think this impossible: where the contrary is the case, there is nothing too hard to be credited. Something like this was done by the priests of ancient Greece and Rome; and a few centuries ago, tricks of the same nature were practised by the monks, and other libertines, upon some of the visionary and enthusiastic women of Europe.—Hence we need not think it strange, if the Fakiers generally succeed in attempts of this nature; when we consider, that they only have to deceive a people brought up in the most consummate ignorance; and that nothing can be a more flattering distinction to female vanity, than for a woman to suppose herself such a peculiar favorite of the divinity she worships, as to be chosen, from all her companions, to the honor of being admitted to his embraces; a favor, which her self-admiration will dispose her more readily to believe than examine.

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BUT it is not the religion of the Hindoos only, that is unfavourable to chastity; that of Mahomet, which now prevails over a great part of India, is unfavourable to it likewise. Mahometanism every where indulges the men with a plurality of wives, while it ties down the women to the strictest conjugal fidelity; hence, while the men riot in unlimited variety, the women are in great numbers

confined to share among them the scanty favours of one man only. This unnatural and impolitic conduct induces them to seek by art and intrigue what they are denied by the laws of their prophet. As polygamy prevails over all Asia, this art and intrigue follow (as the consequence of it; some have imagined, that it is the result of climate, but it rather appears to be the result of the injustice which women suffer by polygamy; for it seems to reign as much in Constantinople, and in every other place where polygamy is in fashion, as it does on the banks of the Ganges, or the Indus. The famous Montesquieu, whose system was, that the passions are entirely regulated by the climate, brings as a proof of this system, a story from the collection of voyages for the establishment of an East India Company, in which it is said, that at Patan, "the wanton desires of the women are so outrageous, that the men are obliged to make use of a certain apparel to shelter them from their designs." Were this story really true, it would be but a partial proof of the effect of climate, for why should the burning suns of Patan only influence the passions of the fair? Why should they there transport that sex beyond decency, which in all other climates is the most decent, and leave in so cool and defensive a state, that sex, which in all other climates is apt to be the most offensive and indecent? To whatever length the spirit of intrigue may be carried in Asia and Africa, however the passions of the women may prompt them to excite

desire, and to throw themselves in the way of gratification, we have the strongest reasons to reprobate all these stories, which would make us believe, that they are so lost to decency as to attack the other sex: such a system would be overturning nature, and inverting the established laws by which she governs the world.

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IN Otaheite, an island lately discovered in the great Southern Ocean, we are presented with women of a singular character. As far as we can recollect, we think it is a pretty general rule, that wherever the sex are accustomed to be constantly clothed, they are ashamed to appear naked: those of Otaheite seem however to be an exception to this rule; to shew themselves in public, with or without clothing, appears to be to them a matter of equal indifference, and the exposition of any part of their bodies, is not attended with the least backwardness or reluctance; circumstances from which we may reasonably infer, that, among them, clothes were not originally invented to cover shame, but either as ornaments, or as a defence against the cold. But a still more striking singularity in the character of these women, and which distinguishes them not only from the females of all other nations, but likewise from those of almost all other animals, is, their performing in public those rites, which in every other part of the globe, and almost among all animals, are performed in privacy

and retirement: whether this is the effect of innocence, or of a dissoluteness of manners to which no other people have yet arrived, remains still to be discovered; that they are dissolute, even beyond any thing we have hitherto recorded, is but too certain. As polygamy is not allowed among them, to satisfy the lust of variety, they have a society called Arreoy, in which every woman is common to every man; and when any of these women happens to have a child, it is smothered in the moment of its birth, that it may not interrupt the pleasures of its infamous mother; but in this juncture, should nature relent at so horrid a deed, even then the mother is not allowed to save her child, unless she can find a man who will patronise it as a father; in which case, the man is considered as having appropriated the woman to himself, and she is accordingly extruded from this hopeful society. These few anecdotes sufficiently characterise the women of this island. In some of the adjacent ones, which were visited by his majesty's ships upon this discovery, if the women were not less unchaste, they were at least less flagitious and indelicate.

## CHAPTER LXIX.

*Italian Debauchery.—Female Slanderers—  
Crim. Con. of Claudius and Pompeia.*

IF chastity is one of the most shining virtues of the French, it is still less so of the Italians. Almost all the travellers who have visited Italy, agree in describing it as the most abandoned of all the countries of Europe. At Venice, at Naples, and indeed in almost every part of Italy, women are taught from their infancy, the various arts of alluring to their arms, the young and unwary, and of obtaining from them, while heated by love or wine, every thing that flattery and false smiles can obtain in those unguarded moments ; and so little infamous is the trade of prostitution, and so venal the women, that hardly any rank or condition sets them above being bribed to it, nay, they are frequently assisted by their male friends and acquaintances to derive a good bargain ; nor does their career of debauchery finish with their unmarried state : the vows of fidelity which they make at the altar, are like the vows and oaths made upon too many other occasions, only considered as nugatory forms, which law has obliged them to take, but custom absolved them from performing. They even claim and enjoy greater liberties after marriage than before ; every married woman has a cicisbeo, or gallant, who attends her to all public places, hands her in and out of her carriage, picks up her gloves or fan,

and a thousand other little offices of the same nature ; but this is only his public employment, as a reward from which, he is entitled to have the lady as often as he pleases at a place of retirement sacred to themselves, where no person, not even the most intrusive husband must enter, to be witness of what passed between them. This has been considered by people of all other nations, as a custom not altogether consistent with chastity and purity of manners ; the Italians themselves, however, endeavor to justify it in their conversations with strangers, and Baretti has of late years published a formal vindication of it to the world. In this vindication he has not only deduced the original of it from pure Platonic love, but would willingly persuade us that it is still continued upon the same mental principles ; a doctrine which the world will hardly be credulous enough to swallow, even though he should offer more convincing arguments to support it than he has already done.

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**THERE** is amongst us another female character, not uncommon, which we denominate the outrageously virtuous. Women of this stamp never fail to seize all opportunities of exclaiming, in the bitterest manner, against every one upon whom even the slightest suspicion of indiscretion or unchastity has fallen ; taking care, as they go along, to magnify every mole-hill into a mountain, and every thoughtless freedom into the blackest of crimes.

But besides the illiberality of thus treating such as may frequently be innocent, you may credit us, dear countrywomen, when we aver, that such a behavior, instead of making you appear more virtuous, only draws down upon you, by those who know the world, suspicions not much to your advantage. Your sex are in general suspected by ours, of being too much addicted to scandal and defamation ; a suspicion, which has not risen of late years, as we find in the ancient laws of England a punishment, known by the name of ducking-stool, annexed to scolding and defamation in the women, though no such punishment nor crime is taken notice of in the men. This crime, however, we persuade ourselves, you are less guilty of, than is commonly believed : but there is another of a nature not more excusable, from which we cannot so much exculpate you ; which is, that harsh and forbidding appearance you put on, and that ill-treatment, which you no doubt think necessary, for the illustration of your own virtue, you should bestow on every one of your sex who has deviated from the path of rectitude. A behavior of this nature, besides being so opposite to that meek and gentle spirit which should distinguish female nature, is in every respect contrary to the charitable and forgiving temper of the Christian religion, and infallibly shuts the door of repentance against an unfortunate sister, willing, perhaps, to abandon the vices into which heedless inadvertency had plunged her, and from which none of you can promise yourselves an absolute security.

We wish not fair countrywomen, like the declaimer and satirist, to paint you all vice and imperfection, nor, like the venal panegyrist, to exhibit you all virtue. As impartial historians, we confess that you have, in the present age, many virtues and good qualities, which were either nearly or altogether unknown to your ancestors; but do you not exceed them in some follies and vices also? Is not the levity, dissipation, and extravagance of the women of this century arrived to a pitch unknown and unheard-of in former times? Is not the course which you steer in life, almost entirely directed by vanity and fashion? And are there not too many of you, who, throwing aside reason and good conduct, and despising the counsel of your friends and relations, seem determined to follow the mode of the world, however it may favour of folly, and however it may be mixed with vice? Do not the generality of you dress, and appear above your station, and are not many of you ashamed to be seen performing the duties of it? To sum up all, do not too, too many of you act as if you thought the care of a family, and the other domestic virtues, beneath your attention, and that the sole end for which you were sent into the world, was to please and divert yourselves, at the expence of those poor wretches the men, whom you consider as obliged to support you in every kind of idleness and extravagance? While such is your conduct, and while the contagion is every day increasing, you are not to be surprised if the men, still fond of you as playthings, in the hours of



mirth and revelry, shun every serious connection with you ; and while they wish to be possessed of your charms, are so much afraid of your manners and conduct, that they prefer the cheerless state of a bachelor, to the numberless evils arising from being tied to a modern wife.

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OUR own times furnish us with an instance of a ceremony from which all women are carefully excluded ;\* but the Roman ladies, in performing the rites sacred to the good goddess, were even more afraid of the men than our masons are of women ; for we are told by some authors, that so cautious were they of concealment, that even the statues and pictures of men and other male animals were hood-winked with a thick veil. The house of the consul, though commonly so large that they might have been perfectly secured against all intrusion in some remote apartment of it, was obliged to be evacuated by all male animals, and even the consul himself was not suffered to remain in it. Before they began their ceremonies, every corner and lurking-place in the house was carefully searched, and no caution omitted to prevent all possibility of being discovered by impertinent curiosity, or disturbed by presumptive intrusion. But these cautions were not all the guard that was placed round them ; the laws of the Romans made it death for any man to be present at the solemnity.

\* Masonry.

Such being the precautions, and such the penalties for insuring the secrecy of this ceremony, it was only once attempted to be violated, though it existed from the foundation of the Roman empire till the introduction of christianity ; and this attempt was made, not so much perhaps with a view to be present at the ceremony, as to fulfil an assignation with a mistress. Pompeia, the wife of Cæsar, having been suspected of a criminal correspondence with Claudius, and so closely watched that she could find no opportunity of gratifying her passion, at last, by the means of a female slave, settled an assignation with him at the celebration of the rites of the good goddess. Claudius was directed to come in the habit of a singing-girl, a character he could easily personate, being young and of a fair complexion. As soon as the slave saw him enter, she ran to inform her mistress. The mistress eager to meet her lover, immediately left the company, and threw herself into his arms, but could not be prevailed upon by him to return so soon as he thought necessary for their mutual safety upon which he left her, and began to take a walk through the rooms, always avoiding the light as much as possible. While he was thus walking by himself, a maid servant accosted him, and desired him to sing ; he took no notice of her, but she followed and urging him so closely, that he was at last obliged to speak. His voice betrayed his sex ; the maid-servant shrieked, and running into the room where the rites were performing, told that a man was in the house. The women in the

utmost consternation, threw a veil over the mysteries, ordered the doors to be secured, and with lights in their hands, ran about the house searching for the sacrilegious intruder. They found him in the apartment of the slave who had admitted him, drove him out with ignominy, and, though it was in the middle of the night, immediately dispersed, to give an account to their husbands of what had happened. Claudius was soon after accused of having profaned the holy rites; but the populace declaring in his favor, the judges, fearing an insurrection, were obliged to acquit him.

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## CHAPTER LXX.

*Jewish Customs—Ancient Customs—Athenian Midwife, &c.—Canadian Women—Superstition, &c.*

IN the religion of the modern Jews, there are some ceremonies peculiar to their women, at the commencement of their sabbath, which is on the Friday evening at half an hour before the sun sets. Every conscientious Jew must have a lamp lighted in his house, even though he should borrow the oil of his neighbour. The lighting of these lamps is a kind of religious rite, invariably assigned to the women, in order to recal to their memory the crime by which their original mother first extinguished the lamp of righteousness, and to teach them, that they ought to do every thing in their power to atone for that crime by re-

kindling it. Instead of the scape-goat, which this people formerly loaded with their sins, and sent into the wilderness, they now substitute a fowl. Every father of a family takes a white cock, and the mother of the family a white hen, which she strikes upon the head, repeating at every stroke, "Let this hen atone for my sins ; she shall die but I shall live." This done she twists her neck, and cuts her throat, to signify, that without shedding of blood there is no remission of sin. If a woman, however, happens to be pregnant at the time of this ceremony, as she cannot ascertain whether the infant is a male or a female, that its sins, of whatever gender it be, may not be unexpiated, she takes both a hen and cock, that she may be assured of having performed the ceremony as required by their law.

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**BESIDES** these ceremonies already mentioned, the women in ancient times, as directed by fancy or instigated by regard, decked the tombs of their deceased friends ; they hung lamps upon them, and adorned them with a variety of herbs and flowers ; a custom at this time observed by the inhabitants of Constantinople and its neighborhood, who not only adorn the tombs of their dead, but plant their burying-grounds with rosemary, cypress, and other odoriferous shrubs and flowers ; but whether with a view to please the manes of the dead, or preserve the health of the living, is uncertain. There were other ornaments besides these we have now mentioned, used

by the women of antiquity to deck the tombs. Among the Greeks, the tomb of a deceased lover was frequently hung round with locks of the hair of his mistress. They likewise made offerings, and poured out libations to the ghosts, whom they suppose to smell, to eat, and to drink as they did while upon earth. This was not only a prevailing opinion among the ancients, but has not as yet been totally obliterated. It is still believed by the Chiriguans; and at Narva, one of the principal towns of Livonia, they celebrate a remarkable festival sacred to the manes of the dead. On the eve of Whitsuntide the women assemble in the church yard, and spreading napkins on the graves and tomb-stones, cover them with a variety of dishes of broiled and fried fish, custards, and painted eggs; and to render them more agreeable to the ghosts, the priest, while he is praying over them, perfumes them with frankincense, the women all the time howling and lamenting in the most dismal manner, and the intelligent clerk not less assiduously employed in defrauding the ghosts, by gathering up all the viands for the use of the priest.

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BESIDES these ceremonies of religion and of mourning, which the women have appropriated to themselves, there are others observed by them, which, arising from their nature, and the circumstances attending it, may for that reason, be denominated sexual. In Chirigua, when a girl arrives at a certain age,

her female relations inclose her in a hammoc, and suspend it at the end of her cottage. Having remained in this hammock for one month, they let it down half way, and at the end of another month, the neighboring women assemble, and having armed themselves with clubs and staves, enter the cottage in a frantic manner, striking furiously upon every thing within it. Having acted this farce for some time, one of them declares that she has killed the serpent which had stung the girl; upon which she is liberated from her confinement, the women rejoice for some time together, and then depart every one to her own home. Among some of the Tartarian tribes, when a girl arrives at the same period of life, they shut her up for some days, and afterwards hang a signal on the top of her tent, to let the young men know that she is become marriageable. Among others of these tribes, the parents of the girl make a feast on this occasion, and having invited their neighbors, and treated them with milk and horse-flesh, they declare their daughter is become marriageable, and that they are ready to dispose of her as soon as a proper opportunity shall offer. In Circassia and Georgia, where parents are sometimes obliged to marry their daughters while infants, to prevent their being violently taken from them by the rich and powerful, the circumstance of a girl being arrived at the time of puberty, is frequently concealed for some time, as the husband has then a right to demand her, and the parents perhaps think her too young for the matrimonial state.

Among the circumstances which gave rise to these customs which we have called sexual, child-bearing is one of the most particular. As in child-bearing some little assistance has generally been necessary in almost all countries; to afford this assistance, the women have commonly employed midwives of their own sex. The Athenians were the only people of antiquity who did otherwise. They had a law which prohibited women and slaves from practising physic: as midwifery was accounted one of the branches of this art, many lives had been lost, because the delicacy of the women would not submit to be delivered by a man. A woman called Agnodice, in order to rescue her country-women from this difficulty, dressed herself in the habit of a man, and having studied the art of physic, revealed herself to the women, who all agree to employ no other. Upon this the rest of the physicians, enraged that she should monopolize all the business arraigned her before the court of Areopagus, as only having obtained the preference to them by corrupting the chastity of the women whom she delivered. This obliging her to discover her sex, the physicians then prosecuted her for violating the laws of her country. The principal matrons of the city, now finding her in such danger, assembled together, came into the court, and petitioned the judges in her favor. The petition of the matrons was so powerful, and the reasons which they urged for having employed her, so conducive to the preservation of female delicacy, that a law was made, allowing

women to practice midwifery. The sex availed themselves of this law, and the assistance of the men soon became quite unfashionable.

Among the Romans, and the Arabians, who after them cultivated the science of medicine with great assiduity, the women in case of difficulty, sometimes submitted to be delivered by a man ; but this was far from being a matter of choice or a general practice : nor was it till the latter end of the last century, and beginning of this, when excess of politeness in France and Italy had begun to eradicate delicacy, that the sex began to give so much into the mode of being delivered by male practitioners ; a mode which now so commonly prevails, that there is scarcely to be found in Europe, a woman so unfashionable as to be delivered by one of her own sex, if she can afford to pay for the assistance of a man. How far the women may be safer in this fashionable way than in the other, we shall not take upon us to determine, but of this we are assured, that the custom is less consistent with delicacy.

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IN some climates, where the constitution is relaxed by the heat, and at the same time not vitiated by those habits which in politer nations destroy mankind, women are said to be delivered with but little pain, and frequently without any assistance ; nor is this singularity altogether peculiar to warm countries, but seems to depend more on living agreea-



bly to nature, than on climate, or any other circumstance; for we have heard it asserted by several people who have been in Canada, that a savage women, when she feels the symptoms of labor coming on her, steals silently to the woods, lays herself down in a coppice, and is delivered alone; which done, she goes to the nearest river or pool, washes herself and the child, and then returns home to her hut.

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WHILE ignorance and superstition disturbed the human mind with groundless terrors and apprehensions, it was a prevailing opinion over all Europe, that lying-in women were more subject to the power of dæmons and witches than a people in any other condition, and that new-born infants, if not carefully watched, and secured by ceremonies and spells, were frequently carried away by them: on this account various ceremonies and spells were commonly made use of; and even so lately as our times, we remember to have seen in the west of Scotland, a horse-shoe nailed upon the door, in an inverted manner, to secure a lying-in woman from the power of witchcraft. But this opinion was not confined to Europe; it pervaded at least half the globe. The Nogais Tartars are the particular dupes of it; when one of their women is in labor, the relations of the family assemble at her door, and make a prodigious noise by beating on pots and kettles, in order to fright away the devil, who they suppose

would, if he did not find them on their guard, do some mischief to the mother or child, or to both.

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## CHAPTER LXXI.

*Custom of the Muscovites—Castration—Eunuchs—Origin of Nunneries—Custom in the Mogul Empire.*

IF the laws we have formerly mentioned, forbidding the marriage of near relations with each other, originated from the political view of preserving the human race from degeneracy, they are the only laws we meet with on that subject, and exert almost the only care we find taken of so important a matter. The Asiatic is careful to improve the breed of his elephants, the Arabian of his horses, and the Laplander of his rein-deer. The Englishman, eager to have swift horses, staunch dogs, and victorious cocks, grudges no care, and spares no expense, to have the males and females matched properly; but since the days of Solon, where is the legislator, or since the times of the ancient Greeks, where are the private persons, who take any care to improve, or even to keep from degeneracy the breed of their own species? The Englishman who solicitously attends the training of his colts and puppies, would be ashamed to be caught in the nursery; and while no motive could prevail upon him to breed horses or hounds from an improper or contaminated kind, he

will calmly, or rather inconsiderately, match himself with the most decrepid or diseased of the human species; thoughtless of the weaknesses and evils he is going to entail on posterity, and considering nothing but the acquisition of fortune he is by her alliance to convey to an offspring, by diseases rendered unable to use it. The Muscovites were formerly the only people, besides the Greeks, who paid a proper attention to this subject. After the preliminaries of a marriage were settled between the parents of a young couple, the bride was stripped naked, and carefully examined by a jury of matrons, when, if they found any bodily defect, they endeavoured to cure it; but if it would admit of no remedy, the match was broke off, and she was considered not only as a very improper subject to breed from, but improper also for maintaining the affections of a husband, after he had discovered the imposition she had put upon him.

In England, the marriage ceremony is not to be performed but in the church, and between the hours of 8 and 12 o'clock in the forenoon. In Scotland, this is deemed incompatible with morality and sound policy, as it hinders the valetudinarian from doing all the justice in his power to the mistress he has lived with and debauched; he may therefore marry her at any hour, or in any place, and by that marriage, legitimate all the children he has by her, whether they be present at the marriage or not. Nearly the same thing takes place all over Germany, only in

some parts of it, the children to be legitimated are required to be present, to be acknowledged by the father, and to hold the lappet of his garment, during the performance of the marriage ceremony.

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AS the appetite towards the other sex is one of the strongest and most ungovernable in our nature; as it intrudes itself more than any other into our thoughts, and frequently diverts them from every other purpose or employment; it may, at first, on this account, have been reckoned criminal when it interfered with worship and devotion; and emasculation was made use of in order to get rid of it, which may, perhaps, have been the origin of eunuchs. But however this be, it is certain, that there were men of various regions, who made themselves incapable of procreation on a religious account. as we are told that the priests of Cybele constantly castrated themselves, and by our Saviour, that there are eunuchs who make themselves such for the kingdom of heaven's sake.

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SOON after the introduction of christianity, St. Mark is said to have founded a society called Therapeutes, who dwelt by the lake Moeris in Egypt, and devoted themselves to solitude and religious offices. About the year 305 of the Christian computation, St. Anthony being persecuted by Dioclesian, retired into the desert near lake Moeris;

numbers of people soon followed his example, joined themselves to the Therapeutes ; St. Anthony being placed as their head, and improving upon their rules, first formed them into regular monasteries, and enjoined them to live in mortification and chastity. About the same time, or soon after, St. Syncletica, resolving not to be behind St. Anthony in her zeal for chastity, is generally believed to have collected together a number of enthusiastic females, and to have founded the first nunnery for their reception. Some imagine the scheme of celibacy was concerted between St. Anthony and St. Syncletica, as St. Anthony, on his first retiring into solitude, is said to have put his sister into a nunnery, which must have been that of St. Syncletica ; but however this be, from their institution, monks and nuns increased so fast, that in the city of Orlans, about seventeen years after the death of St. Anthony, there were twenty thousand virgins devoted to celibacy.

Such at this time was the rage of celibacy ; a rage which, however unnatural, will cease to excite our wonder, when we consider, that it was accounted by both sexes the sure and only infallible road to heaven and eternal happiness ; and as such, it behoved the church vigorously to maintain and countenance it, which she did by beginning about this time to deny the liberty of marriage to her sons. In the first council of Nice, held soon after the introduction of christianity, the celibacy of the clergy was strenuously argued for, and some think that even in an earlier period it

had been the subject of debate ; however this be it was not agreed to in the council of Nice, though at the end of the fourth century it is said that Syricus, bishop of Rome, enacted the first decree against the marriage of monks ; a decree which was not universally received : for several centuries after, we find that it was not uncommon for clergymen to have wives ; even the popes were allowed this liberty, as it is said in some of the old statutes of the church, that it was lawful for the pope to marry a virgin for the sake of having children. So exceedingly difficult is it to combat against nature, that little regard seems to have been paid to this decree of Syricus ; for we are informed, that several centuries after, it was no uncommon thing for the clergy to have wives, and perhaps even a plurality of them ; as we find it among the ordonnances of pope Sylvester, that every priest should be the husband of one wife only ; and Pius the Second affirmed, that though many strong reasons might be adduced in support of the celibacy of the clergy, there were still stronger reasons against it.

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IN a variety of parts of the Mogul empire, when the women are carried abroad, they are put into a kind of machine, like a chariot, and placed on the backs of camels, or in covered sedan chairs, and surrounded by a guard of eunuchs, and armed men, in such a manner, that a stranger would rather suppose the cavalcade to be carrying some desperate vil-

lain to execution, than employed to prevent the intrigues or escape of a defenceless woman. At home, the sex are covered with gauze veils, which they dare not take off in the presence of any man, except their husband or some near relation. Over the greatest part of Asia, and in some places of Africa, women are guarded by eunuchs, made incapable of violating their chastity. In Spain, where the natives are the descendants of the Africans, and whose jealousy is not less strong than that of their ancestors, they, for many centuries, made use of padlocks to secure the chastity of their women; but finding these ineffectual, they frequently had recourse to old women, called *gouvernantes*. It had been discovered, that men deprived of their virility, did not sometimes guard female virtue so strictly, as to be incapable of being bribed to allow another a taste of those pleasures they themselves were incapable of enjoying. The Spaniards, sensible of this, imagined, that vindictive old women were more likely to be incorruptible; as envy would stimulate them to prevent the young from enjoying those pleasures, which they themselves had no longer any chance for; but all powerful gold soon overcame even this obstacle; and the Spaniards, at present, seem to give up all restrictive methods, and to trust the virtue of their women to good principles, instead of rigour and hard usage.

## CHAPTER LXXII.

*Grecian Courtship, Power of Philtres and Charms—Eastern courtship—Long Hair of Saxons and Danes.*

WHAT we have now observed concerning the manner of courtship, was too much the case with the Greeks. In the earlier periods of their history, their love, if we may call it so, was only the animal appetite, impetuous and unrestrained either by cultivation of manners, or precepts of morality; and almost every opportunity which fell in their way prompted them to satisfy that appetite by force, and to revenge the obstruction of it by murder. When they became a more civilized people, they shone much more illustriously in arts and in arms, than in delicacy of sentiment and elegance of manners: hence we shall find, that their method of making love was more directed to compel the fair sex to a compliance with their wishes by charms and philtres, than to win them by the nameless assiduities and good offices of a lover.

As the two sexes in Greece had but little communication with each other, and a lover was seldom favoured with an opportunity of telling his passion to his mistress, he used to discover it by inscribing her name on the walls of his house, on the bark of the trees of a public walk, or the leaves of his books; it was customary for him also to deck the



door of the house, where his fair one lived, with garlands and flowers, to make libations of wine before it, and to sprinkle the entrance with the same liquor, in the manner that was practised at the temple of Cupid. Garlands were of great use among the Greeks in love affairs; when a man untied his garland, it was a declaration of his having been subdued by that passion; and when a woman composed a garland, it was a tacit confession of the same thing: and though we are not informed of it, we may presume that both sexes had methods of discovering by these garlands, not only that they were in love, but the object also upon whom it was directed.

Such were the common methods of discovering the passion of love, the methods of prosecuting it were still more extraordinary, and less reconcileable to civilization and to good principles; when a love affair did not prosper in the hands of a Grecian, he did not endeavor to become more engaging in his manners and person, he did not lavish his fortune in presents, or become more obliging and assiduous in his addresses, but immediately had recourse to incantations and philtres; in composing and dispensing of which, the women of Thessaly were reckoned the most famous, and drove a traffic in them of no inconsiderable advantage. These potions were given by the women to the men, as well as by the men to the women, and were generally so violent in their operation as for some time to deprive the person who took them, of sense, and not uncommonly of

life: their composition was a variety of herbs of the most strong and virulent nature, which we shall not mention; but herbs were not the only things they relied on for their purpose, they called in the productions of the animal and mineral kingdoms to their assistance; when these failed, they roasted an image of wax before the fire, representing the object of their love, and as this became warm, they flattered themselves that the person represented by it would be proportionally warmed with love. When a lover could obtain any thing belonging to his mistress, he imagined it of singular advantage, and deposited it in the earth beneath the threshold of her door. Besides these, they had a variety of other methods equally ridiculous and unavailing, and of which it would be trifling to give a minute detail: we shall, therefore, just take notice as we go along, that such of either sex as believed themselves forced into love by the power of philtres and charms, commonly had recourse to the same methods to disengage themselves, and break the power of these enchantments, which they supposed operated involuntarily on their inclinations; and thus the old women of Greece, like the lawyers of modern times, were employed to defeat the schemes and operations of each other, and like them too, it is presumable, laughed in their sleeves, while they hugged the gains that arose from vulgar credulity.

THE Romans, who borrowed most of their customs from the Greeks, also followed them in that of endeavouring to conciliate love by the power of philtres and charms ; a fact of which we have not the least room to doubt, as there are in Virgil and some other of the Latin poets so many instances that prove it. But it depends not altogether on the testimony of the poets : Piatarch tells us, that Lucullus, a Roman General, lost his senses, by a love potion ;\* and Caius Caligula, according to Suetonius, was thrown into a fit of madness by one which was given him by his wife Cæsonia ; Lucretius too, according to some authors, fell a sacrifice to the same folly. The Romans, like the Greeks, made use of these methods mostly in their affairs of gallantry and unlawful love ; but in what manner they addressed themselves to a lady they intended to marry, has not been handed down to us, and the reason as we suppose is, that little or no courtship was practised among them ; women had no disposing power of themselves, to what purpose was it then to apply to them for their consent ? They were under perpetual guardianship, and the guardian having the sole power of disposing of them,

\* As the notion of love potions and powders is at this day not altogether eradicated, we take this opportunity of assuring our readers, that there is no potion, powder, or medicine known to mankind, that has any specific power of raising or determining the affections to any certain object, and that all pretensions to such are not only vain and illusive, but illegal, and to the last degree dangerous.

it was only necessary to apply to him. In the Roman authors, we frequently read of a father, a brother, or a guardian, giving his daughter, his sister, or his ward, in marriage; but we do not recollect one single instance of being told that the intended bridegroom applied to the lady for her consent; a circumstance the more extraordinary, as women in the decline of the Roman empire had arisen to a dignity, and even to a freedom, hardly equalled in modern times.

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IT has long been a common observation among mankind, that love is the most fruitful source of invention; and that in this case the imagination of a woman is still more fruitful of invention and expedient than that of a man; agreeably to this, we are told, that the women of the island of Amboyna, being closely watched on all occasions, and destitute of the art of writing, by which, in other places, the sentiments are conveyed at any distance, have methods of making known their inclinations to their lovers, and of fixing assignations with them, by means of nosegays, and plates of fruit so disposed, as to convey their sentiments in the most explicit manner: by these means their courtship is generally carried on, and by altering the disposition of symbols made use of, they contrive to signify their refusal, with the same explicitness as their approbation. In some of the neighbouring islands, when a young man has fixed his affection, like the Italians,

He goes from time to time to her door, and plays upon some musical instrument; if she gives consent, she comes out to him, and they settle the affair of matrimony between them: if, after a certain number of these kind of visits, she does not appear, it is a denial; and the disappointed lover is obliged to desist.

We shall see afterward, when we come to treat of the matrimonial compact, that, in some places, the ceremony of marriage consists in tying the garments of the young couple together, as an emblem of that union which ought to bind their affections and interests. This ceremony has afforded a hint for lovers to explain their passion to their mistresses, in the most intelligible manner, without the help of speech, or the possibility of offending the nicest delicacy. A lover in these parts, who is too modest to declare himself, seizes the first opportunity he can find, of sitting down by his mistress, and tying his garment to hers, in the manner that is practised in the ceremony of marriage: if she permits him to finish the knot, without any interruption, and does not soon after cut or loose it, she thereby gives her consent; if she looses it, he may tye it again on some other occasion, when she may prove more propitious; but if she cuts it, his hopes are blasted forever.

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TO this account we shall add some remarks on the dress of the Anglo-Saxons and

Danes. They considered their hair as one of their greatest personal beauties, and took great care to dress it to the utmost advantage. Young ladies wore it loose, and flowing in ringlets over their shoulders; but after marriage they cut it shorter, tied it up, and covered it with a head dress, according to the fashion of the times; but to have the hair cut entirely off, was a disgrace of such a nature, that it was even thought a punishment not inadequate to the crime of adultery; so great, in the middle ages, was the value set upon the hair by both sexes, that, as a piece of the most peculiar mortification, it was ordered by the canons of the church, that the clergy should keep their hair short, and shave the crown of their head; and that they should not, upon any pretence whatever, endeavour to keep the part so shaved from the public view. Many of the clergy of these times, finding themselves so peculiarly mortified, and perhaps so easily distinguished from all other people by this particularity, as to be readily detected when they committed any of the follies or crimes to which human nature is in every situation sometimes liable, endeavoured to persuade mankind, that long hair was criminal, in order to reduce the whole to a similarity with themselves. Amongst these, St. Wulstan eminently distinguished himself; "He rebuked," says William of Malmsbury, "the wicked of all ranks with great boldness; but was particularly severe upon those who were proud of their long hair. When any of these vain people bowed their heads

before him, to receive his blessing, before he gave it he cut a lock from their hair, with a sharp pen-knife, which he carried about him for that purpose : and commanded them, by way of penance for their sins, to cut all the rest in the same manner : if any of them refused to comply with his command he reproached them for their effeminacy. and denounced the most dreadful judgments against them. Such, however, was the value of the hair in those days, that many rather submitted to his censures, than part with it ; and such was the folly of the church, and of this saint in particular, that the most solemn judgments were denounced against multitudes, for no other crime than not making use of pen-knives and scissars, to cut off an ornament bestowed by nature."

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### CHAPTER LXXIII.

*The Lapland and Greenland Lady—sale of Children to purchase Wives—Plurality and Community of Wives—Girls sold at Auction*

THE delicacy of a Lapland lady, which is not in the least hurt by being drunk as often as she can procure liquor; would be wounded in the most sensible manner, should she deign at first to listen to the declaration of a lover ; he is therefore obliged to employ a match-maker to speak for him ; and this match-maker must never go empty-handed ;

and of all other presents, that which most infallibly secures him a favourable reception, is brandy. Having, by the eloquence of this, gained leave to bring the lover along with him, and being, together with the lover's father or other nearest male relation, arrived at the house where the lady resides, the father and match-maker are invited to walk in, but the lover must wait patiently at the door till further solicited. The parties, in the mean time, open their suit to the other ladies of the family, not forgetting to employ in their favour their irresistible advocate brandy, a liberal distribution of which reckoned the strongest proof of the lover's affection. When they have all been warmed by the lover's bounty, he is brought into the house, pays his compliments to the family, and is desired to partake of their cheer, though at this interview seldom indulged with a sight of his mistress; but if he is, he salutes her, and offers her presents of rein-deer skins, tongues, &c.; all which, while surrounded with her friends, she pretends to refuse; but at the same time giving her lover a signal to go out, she soon steals after him, and is no more that modest creature she affected to appear in company. The lover now solicits for the completion of his wishes; if she is silent, it is construed into consent; but if she throws his presents on the ground with disdain, the match is broke off forever.

It is generally observed, that women enter into matrimony with more willingness, and less anxious care and solicitude, than men,



for which many reasons naturally suggest themselves to the intelligent reader. The women of Greenland are however, in many cases, an exception to this general rule. A Greenlander, having fixed his affection, acquaints his parents with it; they acquaint the parents of the girl; upon which two female negociators are sent to her, who, lest they should shock her delicacy, do not enter directly on the subject of their embassy, but launch out in praises of the lover they mean to recommend, of his house, of his furniture, and whatever else belongs to him, but dwell most particularly on his dexterity in catching of seals. She, pretending to be affronted, runs away, tearing the ringlets of her hair as she retires; after which the two females, having obtained a tacit consent from her parents, search for her, and on discovering her lurking place, drag her by force to the house of her lover, and there leave her. For some days she sits with dishrivalled hair, silent and dejected, refusing every kind of sustenance, and at last, if kind entreaties cannot prevail upon her, is compelled by force, and even by blows, to complete the marriage with her husband. It sometimes happens, that when the female match makers arrive to propose a lover to a Greenland young woman, she either faints, or escapes to the uninhabited mountains, where she remains till she is discovered and carried back by her relations, or is forced to return by hunger and cold; in both which cases, she previously cuts off her hair; a

most infallible indication, that she is determined never to marry.

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IN Timor, an island in the Indian Ocean, it is said, that parents sell their children in order to purchase more wives. In Circassia, women are reared and improved in beauty and every alluring art, only for the purpose of being sold. The prince of the Circassians demanded from the prince of Mingrelia an hundred slaves loaded with tapestry, an hundred cows, as many oxen, and the same number of horses, as the price of his sister. In New-Zealand, we meet with a custom which may be called purchasing a wife for a night, and which is a proof that those must also be purchased who are intended for a longer duration; and what to us is a little suprising, this temporary wife, insisted upon being treated with as much deference and respect, as if she had been married for life; but in general, this is not the case in other countries, for the wife who is purchased, is always trained up in the principles of slavery; and, being inured to every indignity and mortification from her parents, she expects no better treatment from her husband.

There is little difference in the condition of her who is put to sale by her sordid parents, and her who is disposed of in the same manner by the magistrates, as a part of the state's property. Besides those we have already mentioned in this work, the Thracians put the fairest of their virgins up to public sale,

and the magistrates of Crete had the sole power of chusing partners in marriage for their young men; and, in the execution of this power, the affection and interest of the parties was totally overlooked, and the good of the state the only object of attention; in pursuing which, they always allotted the strongest and best made of the sex to one another, that they might raise up a generation of warriors, or of women fit to be the mothers of warriors.

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**POLYGAMY** and concubinage having in process of time become fashionable vices, the number of women kept by the great became at last more an article of grandeur and state, than a mode of satisfying the animal appetite: Solomon had threescore queens, and four-score concubines, and virgins without number. Maimon tells us, that among the Jews a man might have as many wives as he pleased, even to the number of a hundred, and that it was not in their power to prevent him, provided he could maintain, and pay them all the conjugal debt once a week; but in this duty he was not to run in to arrear any of them above a month, though with regard to concubines he might do as he pleased.

It would be an endless task to enumerate all the nations which practised polygamy; we shall, therefore, only mention a few where the practice seemed to vary something from the common method. The ancient Sabæans are not only said to have had a plurality, but even a community of wives; a thing strongly in-

consistent with that spirit of jealousy which prevails among the men in most countries where polygamy is allowed. The ancient Germans were so strict monogamists,\* that they reckoned it a species of polygamy for a woman to marry a second husband, even after the death of the first. "A woman (say they) has but one life, and but one body, therefore should have but one husband;" and besides, they added, "that she who knows she is never to have a second husband, will the more value and endeavour to promote the happiness and preserve the life of the first." Among the Heruli this idea was carried farther, a woman was obliged to strangle herself at the death of her husband, lest she should afterwards marry another; so detestable was polygamy in the North, while in the East it is one of these rights which they most of all others esteem, and maintain with such inflexible firmness, that it will probably be one of the last of those that it will wrest out of their hands.

The Egyptians, it is probable, did not allow of polygamy, and as the Greeks borrowed their institutions from them, it was also forbid by the laws of Cecrops, though concubinage seems either to have been allowed or overlooked; for in the *Odyssey* of Homer we find Ulysses declaring himself to be the son of a concubine, which he would probably not have done, had any great degree of infamy been annexed to it. In some cases,

\* Monogamy is having only one wife.

however, polygamy was allowed in Greece, from a mistaken notion that it would increase population. The Athenians, once thinking the number of their citizens diminished, decreed that it should be lawful for a man to have children by another woman as well as by his wife; beside this, particular instances occur of some who transgressed the law of monogamy. Euripides is said to have had two wives, who, by their constant disagreement, gave him a dislike to the whole sex; a supposition which receives some weight from these lines of his in *Andromache* :-

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ne'er will I commend  
More beds, more wives than one, nor children curs'd  
With double mothers, banes and plagues of life.

Socrates too had two wives, but the poor culprit had as much reason to repent of his temerity as Euripides.

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THE ancient Assyrians seem more thoroughly to have settled and digested the affairs of marriage, than any of their contemporaries. Once in every year they assembled together all the girls that were marriageable, when the public crier put them up to sale, one after another. For her whose figure was agreeable, and whose beauty was attracting, the rich strove against each other, who should give the highest price; which price was put into a public stock, and distributed in portions to those whom nature had less liberally accomplished, and whom nobody would accept without a reward. After the most beautiful

were disposed of, these were also put up by the crier, and a certain sum of money offered with each, proportioned to what it was thought she stood in need of to bride a husband to accept her. When a man offered to accept of them, on the terms upon which she was exposed to sale, the crier proclaimed, that such a man had proposed to take such a woman, with such a sum of money along with her, provided none could be found that would take her with less; and in this manner the sale went on, till she was at last allotted to him who offered to take her with the smallest portion.—When this public sale was over, the purchasers of those that were beautiful were not allowed to take them away, till they had paid down the price agreed on, and given sufficient security that they would marry them; nor on the other hand, would those who were to have a premium for accepting of such as were less beautiful, take a delivery of them, till their portions were previously paid. It is probable, that this sale brought together too great multitudes of people from inconvenient distances, to the detriment, perhaps of agriculture and commerce, and that strangers could not give sufficient security to fulfil the bargains they had made; for a law was afterwards issued prohibiting the inhabitants of different districts from intermarrying with each other, and ordaining, that husbands should not use their wives ill; a vague kind of ordonnance, which shews how imperfectly legislation was understood among those people.

## CHAPTER LXXIV.

*Punishment of Adultery—Anecdote of Cæsar—Power of Marrying, &c.—Celibacy of the Clergy.*

AS fidelity to the marriage-bed, especially on the part of the woman, has always been considered as one of the most essential duties of matrimony, all wise legislators, in order to secure that fidelity, have annexed some punishment to the breach of it; these punishments, however, have generally some reference to the manner in which wives were acquired, and to the value stamped upon women by civilization and politeness of manners. It is ordained by the Mosaic code, that both the man and the woman taken in adultery shall be stoned to death; whence it would seem, that no more latitude was given to the male than to the female. But this was not the case; such an unlimited power of concubinage was given to the man that we may suppose him highly licentious indeed, who could not be satisfied therewith, without committing adultery. The Egyptians, among whom women were greatly esteemed, had a singular method of punishing adulterers of both sexes; they cut off the privy parts of the man that he might never be able to debauch another woman; and the nose of the woman, that she might never be the object of temptation to another man.

Punishments nearly of the same nature, and perhaps nearly about the same time, were instituted in the East-Indies against adulterers; but while those of the Egyptians originated from a love of virtue and of their women, those of the Hindoos probably arose from jealousy and revenge. It is ordained by the Shaster, that if a man commit adultery with a woman of a superior cast, he shall be put to death; if by force he commit adultery with a woman of an equal or inferior cast, the magistrate shall confiscate all his possessions, cut off his genitals, and cause him to be carried round the city, mounted on an ass. If by fraud he commit adultery with a woman of an equal or inferior cast, the magistrate shall take his possessions, brand him in the forehead, and banish him the kingdom. Such are the laws of the Shaster, so far as they regard all the superior casts, except the Bramins; but if any of the most inferior casts commit adultery with a woman of the casts greatly superior, he is not only to be dismembered, but tied to a hot iron plate, and burnt to death; whereas the highest casts may commit adultery with the lowest, for the most trifling fine; and a Bramin, or priest, can only suffer by having the hair of his head cut off; and like the clergy of Europe, while under the dominion of the Pope, he cannot be put to death for any crime whatever. But the laws, of which he is always the interpreter, are not so favourable to his wife; they inflict a severe disgrace upon her, if she commit adultery with any of the higher cast; but if with the lowest, the magistrate



shall cut off her hair, anoint her body with Ghee, and cause her to be carried through the whole city, naked, and riding upon an ass; and shall cast her out on the north side of the city, or cause her to be eaten by dogs. If a woman of any of the other casts goes to a man, and entices him to have a criminal correspondence with her, the magistrate shall cut off her ears, lips and nose, mount her upon an ass, and drown her, or throw her to the dogs. To the commission of adultery with a duncing-girl, or prostitute, no punishment nor fine is annexed.

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WHEN Cæsar had subdued all his competitors, and most of the foreign nations which made war against him, he found that so many Romans had been destroyed in the quarrels in which he had often engaged them, that, to repair the loss, promised rewards to fathers of families, and forbade all Romans who were above twenty, and under forty years of age, to go out of their native country. Augustus, his successor, to check the debauchery of the Roman youth, laid heavy taxes upon such as continued unmarried after a certain age, and encouraged with great rewards, the procreation of lawful children. Some years afterwards, the Roman knights having pressingly petitioned him that he would relax the severity of that law, he ordered their whole body to assemble before him, and the married and unmarried to arrange themselves in two separate parties,

when, observing the unmarried to be the much greater company, he first addressed those who had complied with his law, telling them, that they alone had served the purposes of nature and society; that the human race was created male and female to prevent the extinction of the species; and that marriage was contrived as the most proper method of renewing the children of that species. He added, that they alone deserved the name of men and fathers, and that he would prefer them to such offices as they might transmit to their posterity. Then turning to the bachelors, he told them, that he knew not by what name to call them; not by that of men, for they had done nothing that was manly; nor by that of citizens, since the city might perish for them; nor by that of Romans, for they seemed determined to let the race and name become extinct; but by whatever name he called them, their crime, he said, equalled all other crimes put together, for they were guilty of murder, in not suffering those to be born who should proceed from them; of impiety, in abolishing the names and honors of their fathers and ancestors; of sacrilege, in destroying their species, and human nature, which owed its original to the gods, and was consecrated to them; that by leading a single life they overturned, as far as in them lay, the temples and altars of the gods; dissolved the government, by disobeying its laws; betrayed their country, by making it barren. Having ended his speech, he doubled the rewards and privi-

leges of such as had children, and laid a heavy fine on all unmarried persons, by reviving the Popæan law.

Though by this law all the males above a certain age were obliged to marry under a severe penalty, Augustus allowed them the space of a full year to comply with his demands ; but such was the backwardness to matrimony, and perversity of the Roman knights, and others, that every possible method was taken to evade the penalty inflicted upon them, and some of them even married children in the cradle for that purpose ; thus fulfilling the letter, they avoided the spirit of the law, and though actually married, had no restraint upon their licentiousness, nor any incumbrance by the expense of a family.

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Among nations which had shaken off the authority of the church of Rome, the priests still retained almost an exclusive power of joining men and women together in marriage. This appears rather, however, to have been by the tacit consent of the civil power, than from any defect in its right and authority ; for in the time of Oliver Cromwell, marriages were solemnized frequently by the justices of the peace ; and the clergy neither attempted to invalidate them, nor to make the children proceeding from them illegitimate ; and when the province of New England was first settled, one of the earliest laws of the colony was, that the power of marrying should belong to the magistrates. How dif-

ferent was the case of the French settlers in Canada! For many years a priest had not been seen in that country, and a magistrate could not marry: the consequence was natural; men and women joined themselves together as husband and wife, trusting to the vows and promises of each other. Father Charlevoix, a Jesuit, at last travelling into those wild regions, found many of the simple, innocent inhabitants living in that manner; with all of whom he found much fault, enjoined them to do penance, and afterwards married them. After the restoration, the power of marrying again reverted to the clergy. The magistrate, however, had not entirely resigned his right to that power; but it was by a late act of parliament entirely surrendered to them, and a penalty annexed to the solemnization of it by any other person whatever.

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AT a synod held at Winchester under St. Dunstan, the monks farther averred, that so highly criminal was it for a priest to marry, that even a wooden cross had audibly declared against the horrid practice. Others place the first attempt of this kind, to the account of Alefrick, archbishop of Canterbury, about the beginning of the eleventh century: however this be, we have among the canons a decree of the archbishops of Canterbury, and York, ordaining, that all the ministers of God, especially priests, should observe chastity, and not take wives: and in the year

1076, there was a council assembled at Winchester, under Lanfranc, which decreed, That no canon should have a wife; that such priests as lived in castles and villages should not be obliged to put their wives away, but that such as had none should not be allowed to marry; and that bishops should not either ordain priests nor deacons, unless they previously declared that they were not married.— In the year 1102, archbishop Anselm held a council at Westminster, where it was decreed, That no archdeacon, priest, deacon or canon, should either marry a wife, or retain her if he had one. Anselm, to give this decree greater weight, desired of the king, that the principal men of the kingdom might be present at the council, and that the decree might be enforced by the joint consent both of the clergy and laity; the king consented, and to these canons the whole realm gave a general sanction. The clergy of the province of York, however, remonstrated against them, and refused to put away their wives; the unmarried refused also to oblige themselves to continue in that state; nor were the clergy of Canterbury much more tractable.

In the celibacy of the clergy, we may discover also the origin of nunneries: the intrigues they could procure, while at confession, were only short, occasional, and with women who they could not entirely appropriate to themselves; to remedy which, they probably fabricated the scheme of having religious houses, where young women should be shut up from the world, and where no

man but a priest, on pain of death, should enter. That in these dark retreats, secluded from censure, and from the knowledge of the world, they might riot in licentiousness.— They were sensible, that women, surrounded with the gay and the amiable, might frequently spurn at the offers of a cloistered priest, but that while confined entirely to their own sex, they would take pleasure in a visit from one of the other, however slovenly and unpolished. In the world at large, should the crimes of the women be detected, the priests have no interests in mitigating their punishment; but here the whole community of them are interested in the secret of every intrigue, and should Lucinda unluckily proclaim it, she can seldom do it without the walls of the convent; and if she does, the priests lay the crime on some luckless laic, that the holy culprit may come off with impunity.

FINIS.



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